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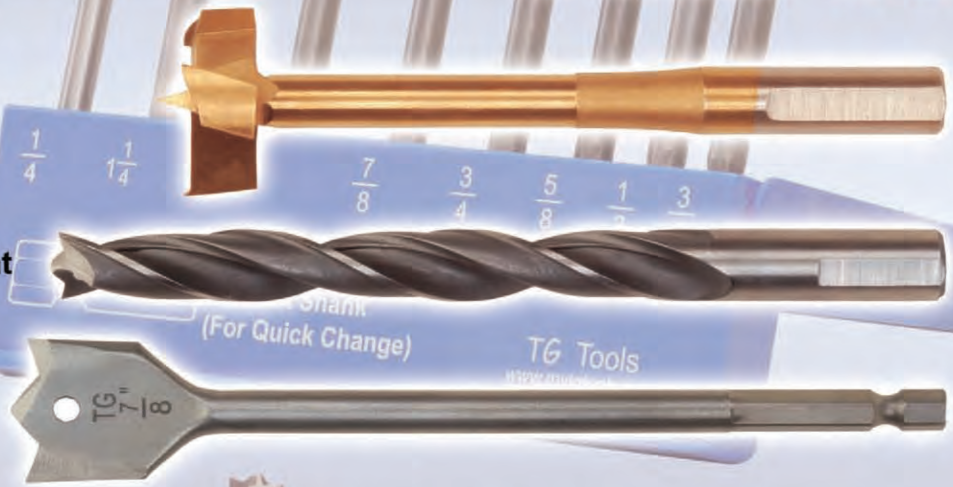

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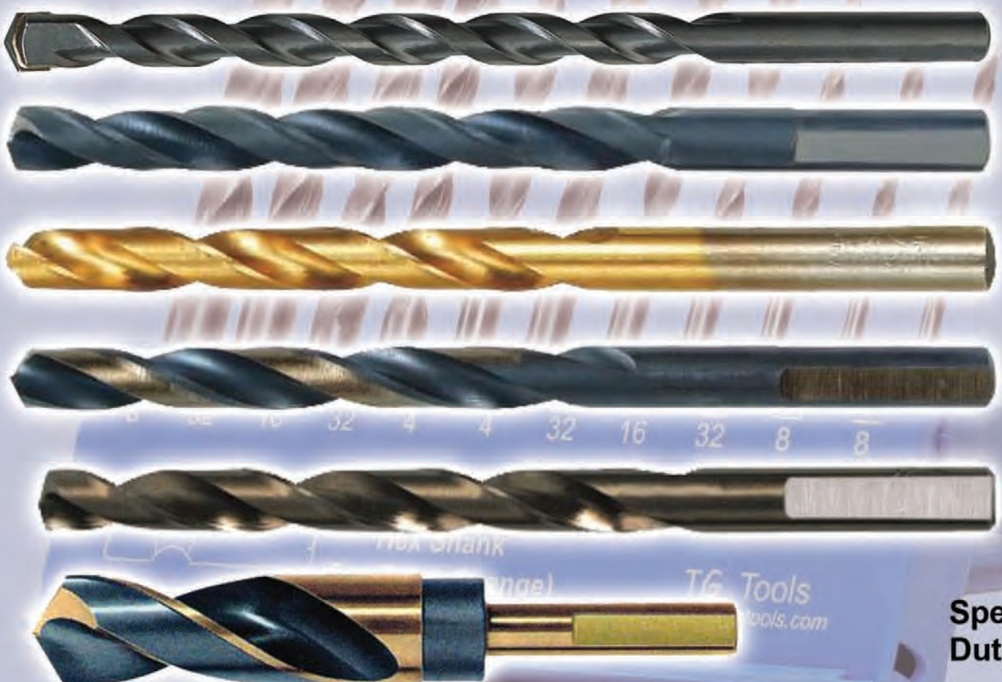

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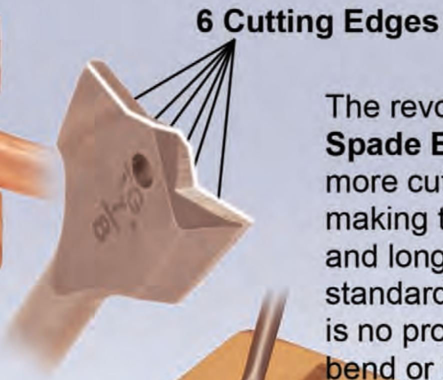

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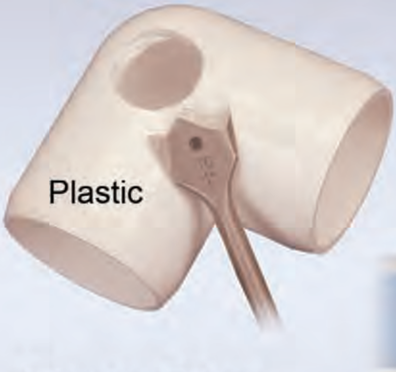

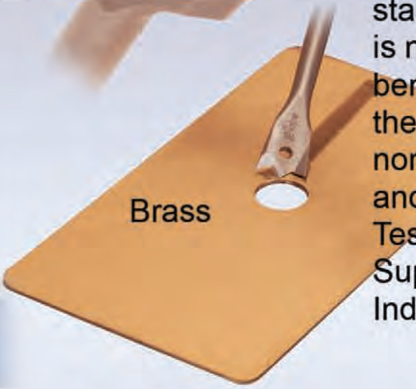

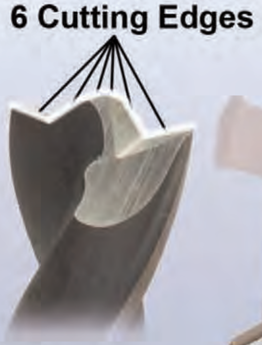

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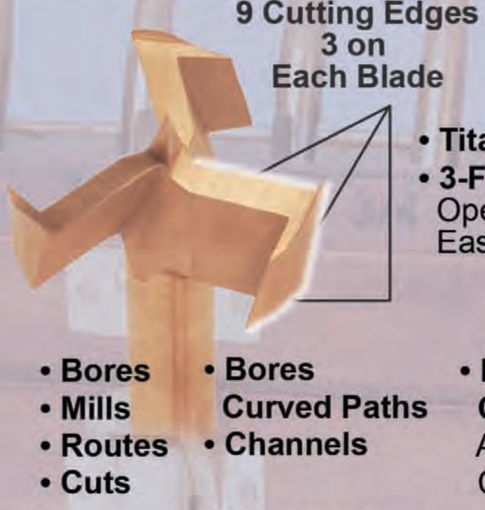

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CONTENTS

Jan/Feb **2010**

FEATURES

40 **Rocky Top**
Pouring and Finishing an Exposed Aggregate Walkway

54 **Crown Molding, Simplified**
The right tools and materials make it easier and faster to install crown molding.

68 **Radiant Heat Roundup**
Hot Products in Underfloor Heating

80 **Add Flare with Trimless Windows**
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CONTENTS

EVERY ISSUE

8 **From the Editor**

95 **Advertisers Index**

COLUMNS

10 **Q & A**

14 **Tool School**
Metal Cutting

30 **Do-It-Yourself**
Benchtop Tool Stand

DEPARTMENTS

88 **Material Market**
Energy Savings
Home Makeover

94 **Hot Products**

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LETTER

From The Editor-In-Chief

Someone once said, “You can’t please all the people all the time,” and those were wise words. I received a complaint from a reader about a tip we ran in a recent issue regarding how to fix a flickering light bulb. No major surgery was recommended; we only suggested prying up the metal tab in the socket with a screwdriver for better contact with the bulb.

Then I heard the voicemail from the concerned reader who prefaced his message with “you’ve probably gotten a thousand phone calls already,” and then proceeded to inform us that we neglected to mention: Unplug the lamp, first!

Well, we only got the one call, but nobody likes to hear a complaint, and I was worried our staff was remiss in its responsibility to safely inform our readers about how-to tips. Then it occurred to me that I learned not to stick objects into active electrical sockets in kindergarten as, I assume, did most of our readers. We target this magazine toward homeowners who are serious about remodeling and repairing their homes, and we take certain levels of experience and common sense for granted among the readership.

We certainly want to stress safety, but we also cover a lot of potentially dangerous subject matter, such as power tool usage. Any power tool owner can attest to the lengthy safety precautions stated in every owner’s manual. I suppose the *EHT* staff would be more responsible purveyors of information if we include a safety sidebar with every mention of a power tool. I’m sure it would relax some lawyers somewhere, but my guess is our readers already know well the basic safety precautions associated with tool usage, or lamp usage for that matter.

I certainly don’t mean to be dismissive of our caller’s critique. Our staff strives to help the DIY homeowner to the best of our abilities, and we encourage you to always research your home projects independently, make yourselves aware of all safety implications and proceed in a responsible manner. We want to inform our readers, but we also want to avoid being pedantic or uninteresting, and sometimes that’s a balancing act.

Thanks for reading,

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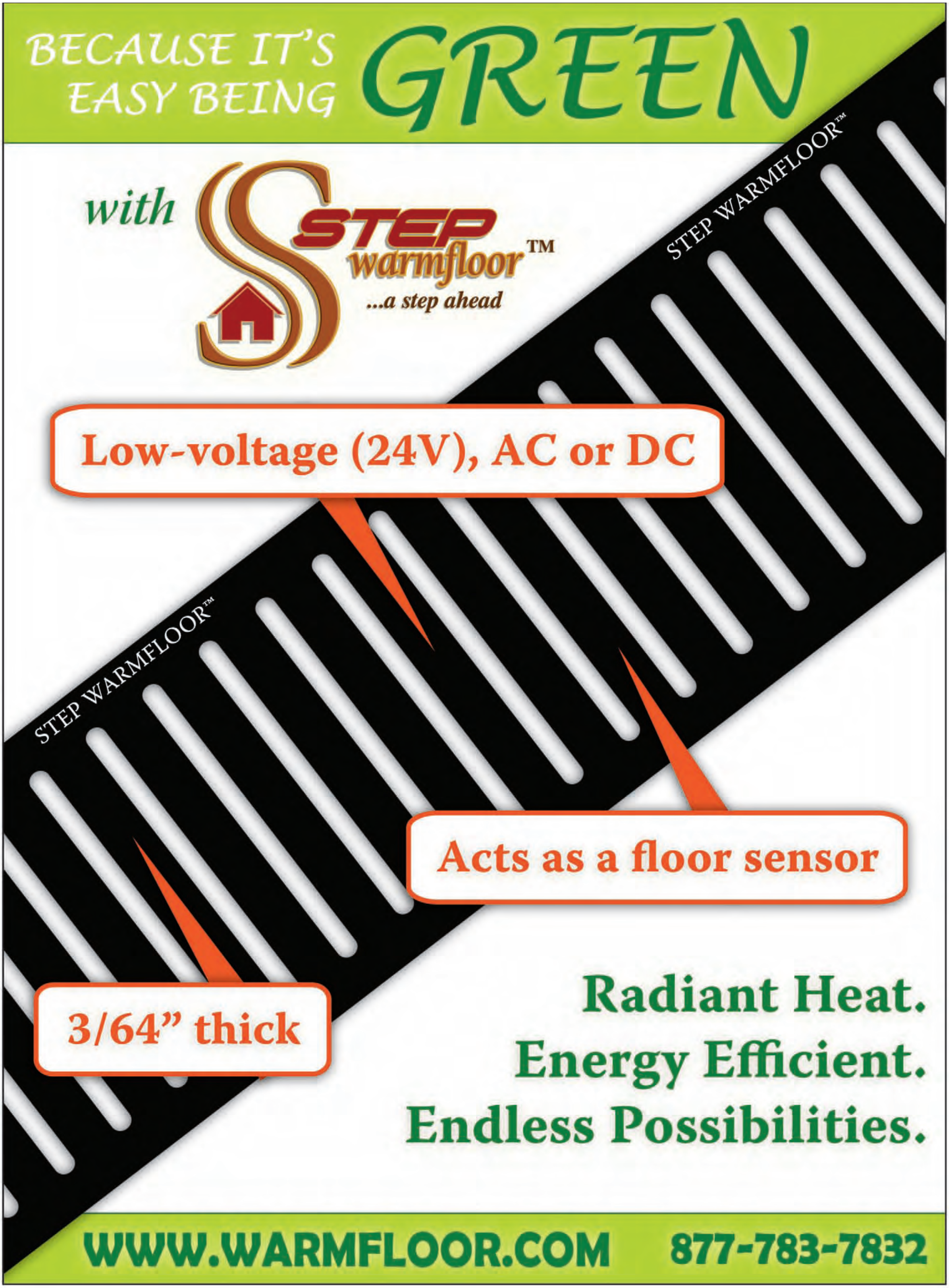
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Q&A Got a ?

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Q: *What causes corrosion of car battery terminals, and what's the best way to deal with it?*

A: The sulfuric acid used in car batteries produces hydrogen gas, which is the primary contributor to corrosion. Small amounts of gas are released that combine with the heat, dirt, oil and humidity in the air, which forms the corrosion on battery cables and terminals. If you don't get it off, it can cause problems, such as trouble starting the vehicle or the electrical supply losing power while you're driving.

To clean the battery, first remove both terminals with a socket wrench, starting with the negative (black) cable. The white crystals of the corrosion are toxic to touch or breathe, so wear gloves and safety gear. Use a stiff wire brush to scrape off all the corrosion from the bolt, cable assembly and the battery terminal. A spray solvent will help loosen the corrosion. Dry the battery and apply a corrosion-resistant jelly or spray lubricant to the terminals. Reattach the battery, fastening the red cable first.

……

Q: *My kitchen floor has a loose seam where two sheets of vinyl floor meet. How do I fix this?*

A: Use a hair dryer to heat the edges of the seam to make the material more flexible. Peel back the edges and remove any debris with a vacuum cleaner. Mask off the seam with painter's tape. Brush on Sheet Flooring Adhesive to the backing on each side of the seam. Press down the flooring firmly, closing the seam tightly. Use a board with weights to hold the seam closed as the glue dries. Then, use a Seam Sealer Kit to fuse together the vinyl edges. Seam Sealer Kits typically include a cleaner, applicator, catalyst and sealant.

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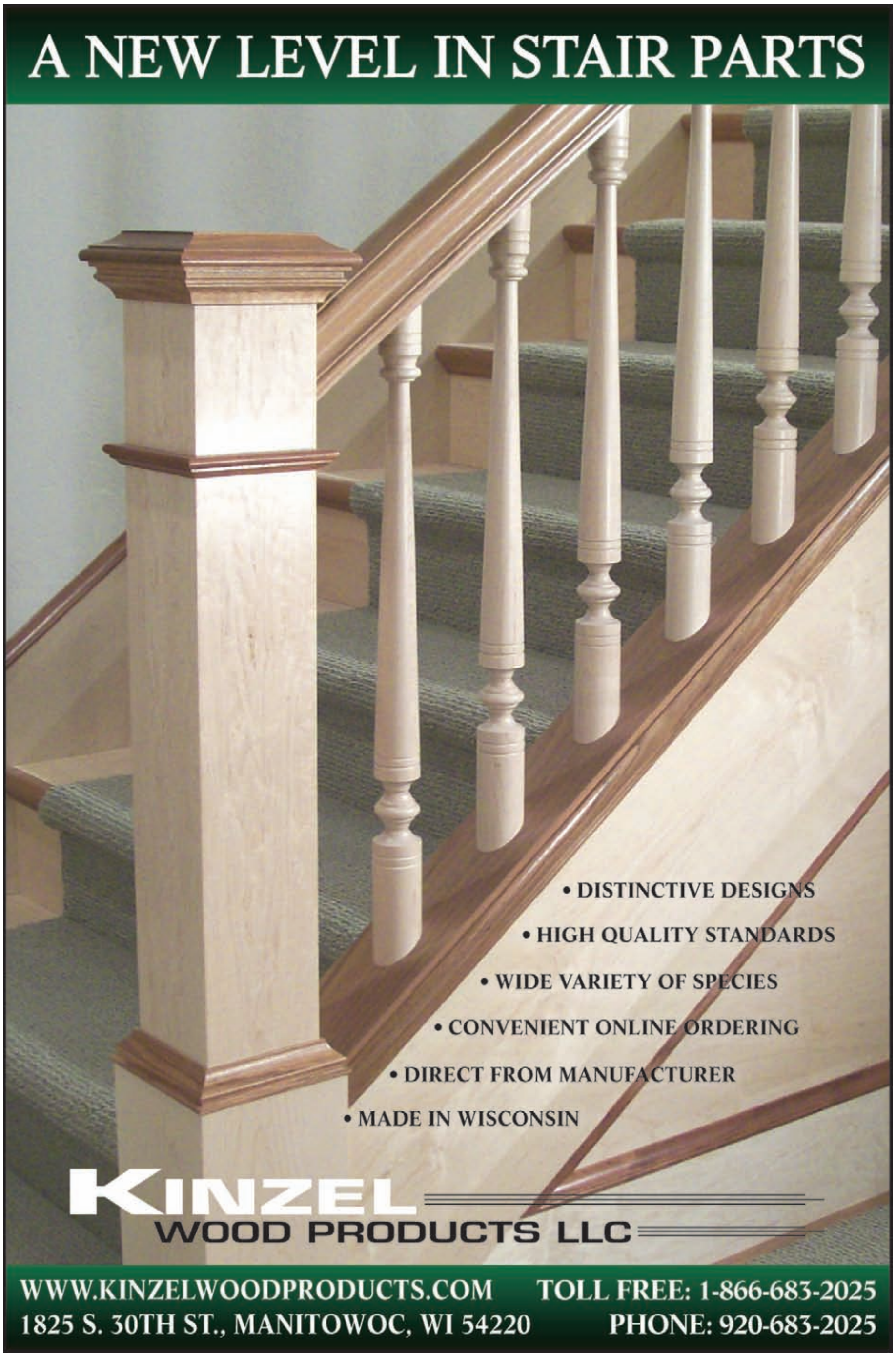
Q. *I am trying to remove my old laminate countertops. After popping loose a couple of screws, the countertop tilts up easily, but the backsplash portion seems very solid. Are these types of backsplashes usually glued to the wall? What's the best way to remove it?*

A. The backsplash may indeed be glued to the wall. Many laminate countertops also come with the backsplash pre-attached at the factory, which means they want to go in—and come out—as one single piece. First, cut the caulk line around the perimeter of the backsplash, so when it pulls away it will not damage the rest of the wall. Remove any screws or fasteners that hold the backsplash and top to the counter or wall. Then, use a reciprocating saw to cut the countertop at the sink opening. Pry the countertop away from the counter, and then pry the backsplash away from the wall separately.

……

Q. *The drain pump on my air-conditioner condenser is leaking onto the floor. Is there any way to fix this without replacing the pump?*

A. Most of these condensate pumps have a switch to cut off the mechanism if the pump fails. If the pump is leaking, then it may have a bad switch. If it's more than three years old, it may best to replace the whole unit (roughly $40 to $50). Because these pumps always hold some amount of water, they tend to collect mold and algae, which can gum up the plumbing. You'll probably need to disconnect the pump's power supply, then remove and disassemble the pump and clean it free of any algae gunk or debris. There's usually only a couple of screws that hold the pump in place. Also, clean out the drain from the pan to the pump, and blow out the exit drain line by wrapping it to the end of a garden hose with some duct tape. Once the blockage is completely removed from the system, it should operate properly. **EHT**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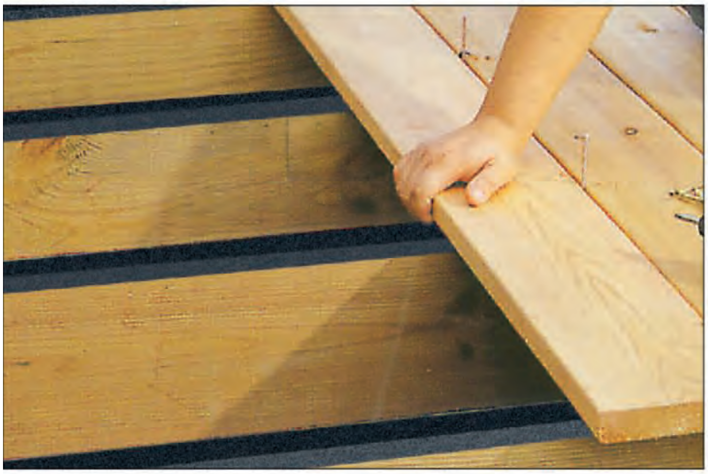

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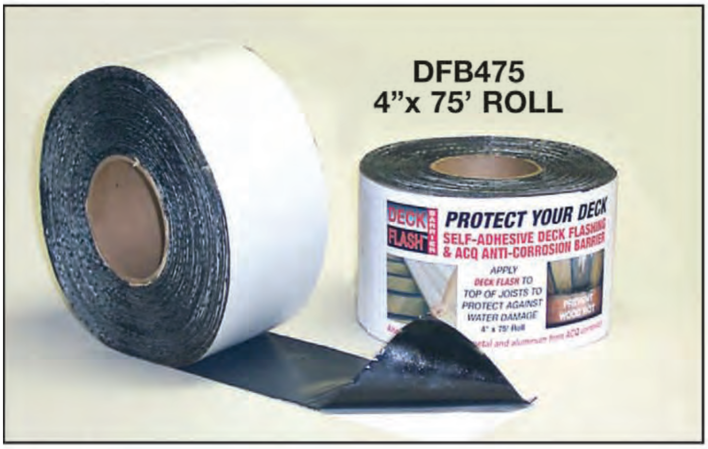
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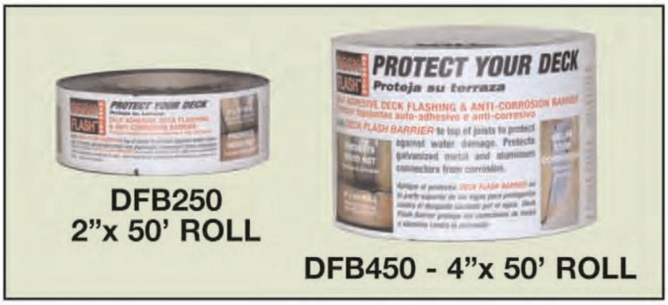
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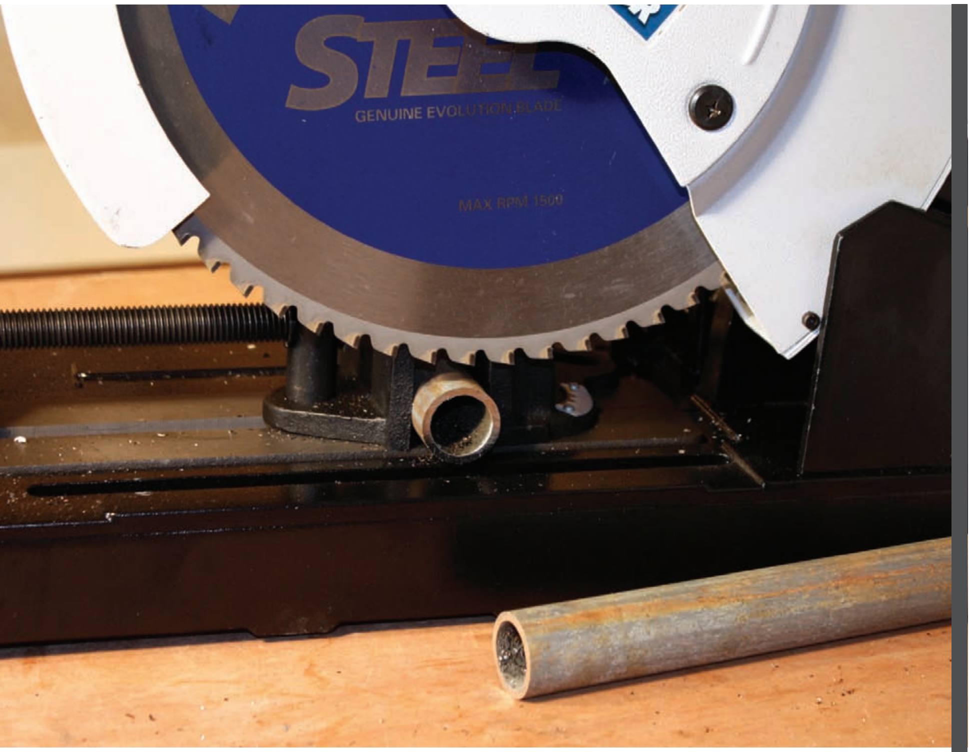

Purpose-built metal cutting power tools make quick work of tough tasks.

By Matt Weber

With the right tools, cutting through metal is easy. With the wrong tools, it's not. As a much harder substance than other building materials like wood, the process of cutting metal can be a challenging, slow-going process that damages blades and generates a lot of heat. Cutting sheet-metal can often be accomplished with simple hand tools. Straight cutters, which are scissor-like hand tools, are used to make straight or gently sloping curves. Some metal snips are designed especially for cutting right- or left-hand curves—a handy design for cutting circles in metal. Standard electric shears use metal-cutting teeth to make fast, straight cuts through sheet metal.

But what about the thicker, harder metals? Grinding is the most common way to cut hardened steel. The abrasive action of the grinding wheel removes metal material at a rapid pace, but it also generates a lot of heat. This heat can at times cause the grinding wheel to break, sending debris flying dangerously around the worksite. And, if your grinding wheel is glazed or clogged, it has no "bite" and you'll only generate heat without cutting.

This article focuses on a handful of metal-cutting power tools that are designed specifically to accomplish such metal-cutting applications in a safe and productive manner.

STEEL CUTTING CIRC SAWS

Evolution Power Tools is a company based in the U.K. that manufactures a range of specialized power tools dedicated to the steel industry. These heavy-duty industrial tools are suitable for sustained daily use, and feature an innovative dry-cutting technology that minimizes heat buildup and dramatically reduces blade wear. The dry cut metal-cutting technology is achieved with a heavy-duty motor that runs at a lower RPM with higher torque, when compared to wood-cutting saws and abrasive cutting saws. The Evolution system uses specialty carbide-tipped circular saw blades to cut materials such as steel, aluminum and stainless steel.

The *EHT* staff had the opportunity to test some of the Evolution saws, starting with the 15-inch EVO380 Raptor Steel Cutting Chop Saw. With a 15-inch tungsten carbide-tipped (TCT) blade, this industrial-grade chop saw quickly and easily penetrates steel without heat, burrs or coolant, leaving a smooth, clean cut. The cutting capacity is remarkable as well, with a 4-3/4-by-4-3/4-inch box section with a 1/4-inch wall thickness—big enough for a steel beam. According to the manufacturer,

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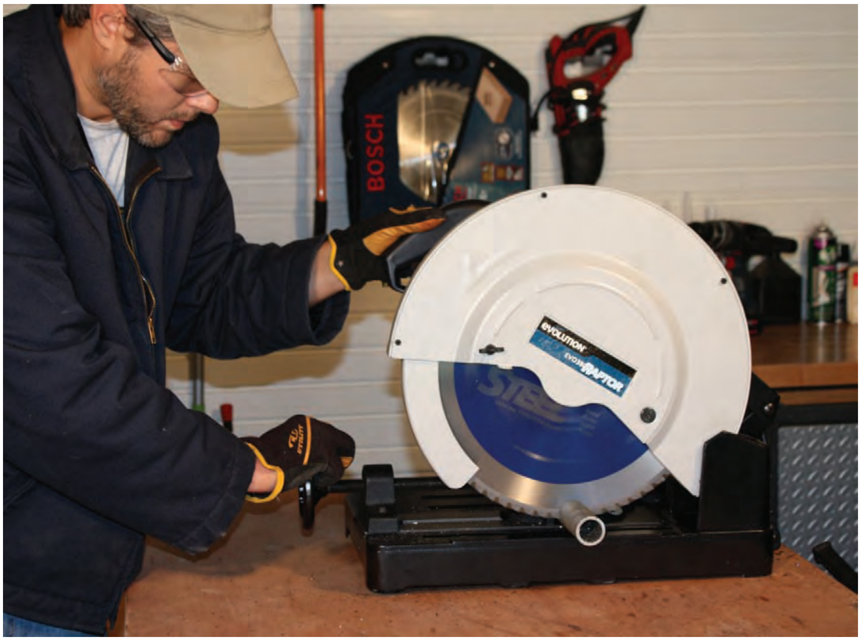
the blade averages 1,000 cuts in 2-by-2-inch mild steel with a wall thickness of 1/8 inch. That's a lot of cutting on a single blade.

Our staff didn't have the time on hand to run the saw for 1,000 cuts, but we put it through the ringer cutting iron pipes, rebar, metal posts, aluminum gutters and a few oddball items we had laying around the workshop. The bottom line: The saw never so much as flinched, much less struggled. Just as the manufacturer professes, the cutting action is much quicker and cleaner than with abrasive cut-off saws, hands down.

Although the saw's price point combined with its specificity of application would probably qualify the EVO380 Raptor as overkill for the average DIY'er, there are



The EVO380 Raptor from Evolution Power Tools is engineered with a heavy-duty motor that runs at a lower RPM and higher torque than conventional chop saws for exceptional metal-cutting performance.

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plenty of professional metal workers, “extreme” hobbyists and serious tool hounds for which this saw would prove to be a great investment.

A high-capacity chop saw, by its very nature of design, is a large, heavy and cumbersome tool to tote around a jobsite and often impractical for certain chores, such as cutting material in place on hard-to-access jobsites. To that end, Evolution offers a couple of handheld TCT circular saws that utilize the same dry-cut technology as the Raptor, a 7-inch and a 9-inch version.

The *EHT* staff kicked around the 9-inch version and loved it. This saw features the same metal-cutting technology as the chop saw, but this time it’s served up “on the go.” We had so much fun slicing through metal posts, pipe and even a few discarded chair legs that we had to fight the temptation to cut through stuff that we actually needed. The saw weighs nearly 20 pounds, which isn’t the lightest in the world but it is easily maneuverable for anyone who is accustomed to working with circ saws. The 1,750-watt motor easily pushes the blade through mild steel without heat

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buildup, burrs or coolant—just like the Raptor. The saw also features a laser guide to assist with accurate cutting and a bevel-tilt feature for cutting at an angle. The saw cuts up to 1/2-inch plate thickness, and the maximum cutting depth is 3-5/16 inches. According to the manufacturer, one of the 9-inch blades cuts up to 87-1/2 yards of 1/4-inch steel plate.

Evolution Power Tools utilize a special TCT (tungsten-carbide tipped) blade to cut metal with no heat buildup, burrs or coolant.

Although the Evolution blades are designed for Evolution Steel cutting saws, they can also be fitted to other brands. Evolution offers blades in a number of popular sizes, and four different types of blades are available; steel, stainless steel, aluminum and wood.

MULTIPURPOSE CIRC SAWS

Running with the metal-cutting concept, Evolution also offers a line of multipurpose saws targeted to general construction work. The Evolution Rage line of multipurpose saws includes a chop saw, a miter saw and a handheld circular saw. The Rage multipurpose saws are engineered to compete with professional quality wood-cutting circ saws while

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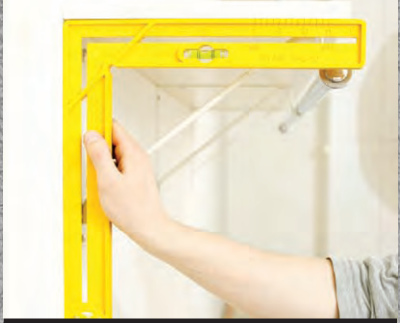

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The 9” Evolution Steel saw comes with a heavy-duty carrying case, a rip fence and offers a cutting depth of 3-5/16 inches.

offering the added ability to cut materials that simply aren’t possible with other saws. The combination of a high-torque motor and gearbox and an ultra high-grade TCT blade enables these saws to cut wood, steel and aluminum using the same blade.

The *EHT* staff had the opportunity to test the handheld Rage 7-1/4-inch multipurpose saw, and it works just as advertised, slicing through some scrap steel and an aluminum door frame with no sparks and minimal burrs. We recreated a typical jobsite scenario by driving nails into the end of a 2-by-4. If you’ve ever run a standard circ saw into an unseen nail, you know to expect a violent and often dangerous kickback when the blade hits. This is not the case with the Rage saw, which coasted

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through four 16d nails with no recoil whatsoever. And, according to the manufacturer, a single blade can cut up to 164 feet of 1/4-inch mild steel before requiring replacement.

Each of Evolution's handheld circ saws, in both the steel-cutting and the multipurpose Rage line, come complete with heavy-duty carrying cases for easy portability.

EXCALIBUR COMBO CUTTER

Regular readers may have seen our staff cover the Excalibur Combo Cutter in a past article on installing a tile countertop. To speed up the process of cutting cement board, the Excalibur's powered shears achieves a straight, dust-free cut with no ragged edges. It's

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The Rage multipurpose saw cuts wood, steel and aluminum with the same blade.

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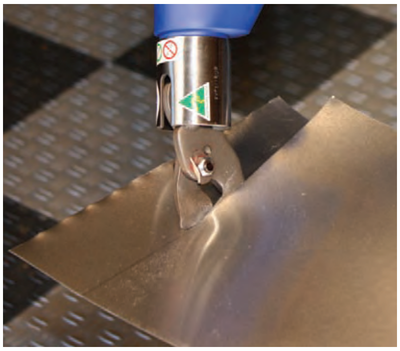
the most accurate cement-board cutting tool we've ever used. I mention this in an article on metal-cutting tools because that same tool serves as an excellent sheet metal shear.

The Excalibur Combo Cutter can cut cement board or sheet metal —just swap the cutting head.

By swapping the interchangeable cutting head, which is as simple as using the provided hex key to loosen two set screws, the Excalibur shears can make straight or curve cuts in steel up to 16 gauge, stainless to 18 gauge, corrugated roofing, and aluminum up to 0.080 inch thick. The Excalibur combo kit includes both cutting heads, and the tool features a powerful 120-volt, 600-watt motor. Easy maneuverability is another key feature, because the cutting heads can be rotated to anywhere in 360 degrees for the most comfortable position for cutting.

MILWAUKEE COMPACT BAND SAW

For tough cut-off jobs that require workers to cut metal in place, Milwaukee Electric Tool's new 6242-6N Compact Band Saw is an ideal tool for cutting metal overhead or in tight spaces. With an easily manageable


The Excalibur easily cuts steel up to 16 gauge.

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weight of only 9-1/2 pounds and a maneuverable length of just 16 inches, the saw is easy to use with minimal user fatigue. With a 3-1/4-inch cut capacity and low vibration, the saw achieves a super-clean cut on a wide variety of construction materials, such as 3-inch angle iron, 2-1/2-inch conduit, 3-inch copper and threaded rod. For dimly lit work spaces in confined areas, the saw also features a handy work light that illuminates the point of blade contact. The saw includes a 200- to 360-SFPM variable speed dial, a 120-volt, 7-amp motor, a blade ejection system for easy changes, and an adjustable material guide so the user can make cuts flush with the ceiling or walls. The saw comes with a durable carrying case for easy toting to the jobsite.

Workmate 425

The 16" Milwaukee Compact Bandsaw is ideal for cutting metal in tight spaces.

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headquarters outside of Chicago. The powder metal steel alloy in the blades reduces heat buildup, a big factor in blade deterioration, and the 2-by-2 tooth geometry removes debris for fast and clean cuts. The first set of teeth cut more aggressively, and then the smaller reinforced teeth follow.

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The right blade makes a difference for jigsaws.

This alternating tooth pitch boosts cutting speeds by 20 percent.

Jigsaws are also excellent tools for making small or intricate cuts in metal, thanks to the saws' inherent maneuverability and the small size of the blade. It helps to choose the right blade to match the application. Available are blades specially designed for aluminum, others are intended for general metal cutting, and some metal-cutting blades are engineered with extra flexibility to reduce the likelihood the blade will break.

For cutting stainless steel, Bosch offers the T118GFS bi-metal blades for twice the life in such difficult specialty applications. The new bi-metal blades feature an 8-percent cobalt steel additive to increase heat and wear resistance. This gives users a blade that lasts twice as long as most other bi-metal blades and costs much less than blades with a carbide tip.

CUT SAFELY

No matter what the tool you're using or what job you're performing, remember that safety should reign supreme when cutting metal. The process is tough on blades, typically generates lots of heat, and there is the risk of breakage from the blades or the stock material, which can lead to flying debris. Never force the tool, and always wear hand and eye protection. When cutting at long intervals, it's also wise to wear hearing protection, and always avoid working around flammable materials when producing sparks. **EHT**

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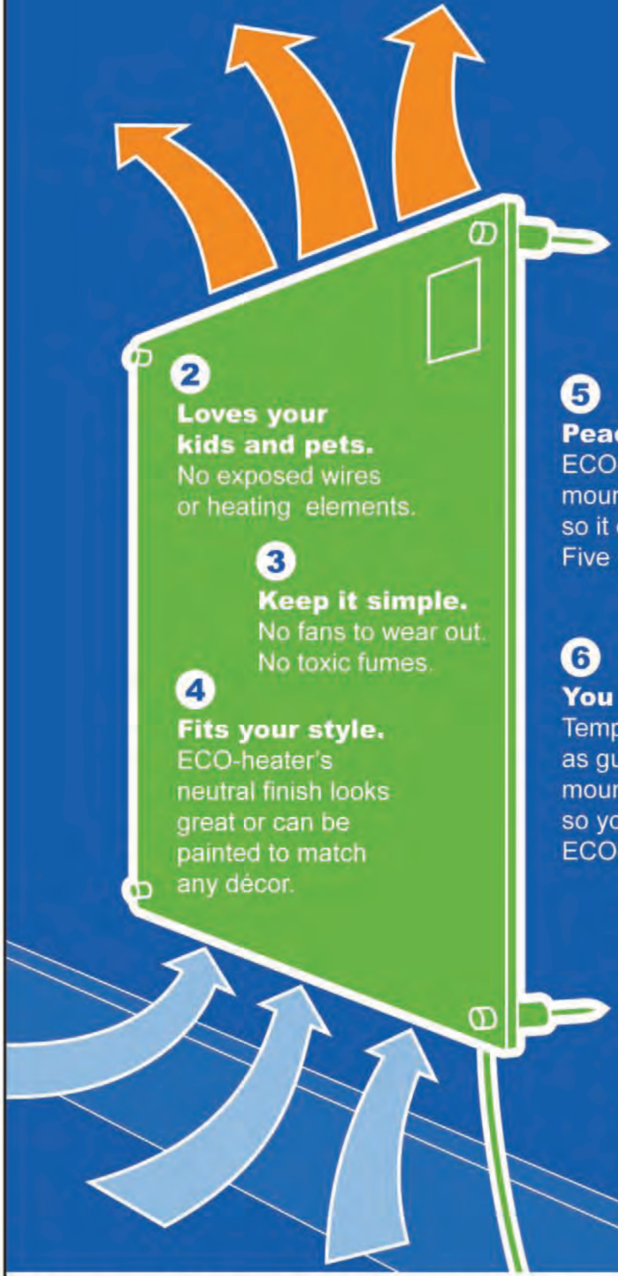

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Benchtop Tool Stand

Build a workstation from common tools and materials.

By Charlie Self

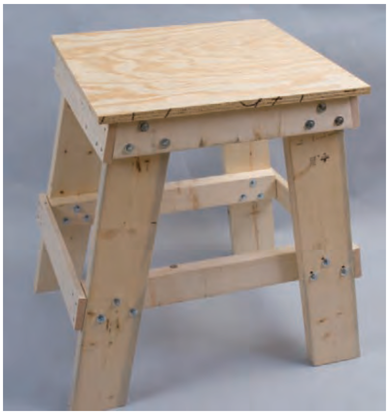
Benchtop tools came into their own with Ryobi's AP10 planer about 15 years ago. Today, most woodworking tool manufacturers make one or more benchtop planer models, tools that make any kind of woodworking a lot easier for most people. As the planers gained popularity, small jointers came along. Short jointers in 6-inch widths are very handy, take up only a little space, and come without any sort of stand, as do the planers. Benchtop drill presses are similar in intent and utility, again, without any kind of stand designed for it. Some small bandsaws come without good stands, too.

Swinging any of these tools onto a real benchtop is easy enough once, though some of the newer planers now weigh about 100 pounds, making repetition both awkward and difficult. Using them at that height may not be. Planers and jointers are easier to work with when their work surface is inches lower than the resulting height on your average benchtop.

The stand built here is sized for a benchtop planer, specifically the DeWalt mounted on it, as shown above. It also works well for a benchtop drill press or jointer. It can easily be raised or lowered during building, simply by cutting legs to different lengths. Adding a shelf, if one is desired, is easy.

Steel stands are also available. They're expensive and hard to assemble, though. Building your own stand with 2-by-6s, 2-by-4s and plywood, plus an occasional bit of 1-by-4, is simple and isn't half the cost of steel stands. This not-so-pretty stand is designed to be exceptionally sturdy, but also easy to make with tools that most people have on hand, or can readily borrow. The Milwaukee slide compound miter saw shown in this article isn't essential, but is a real time saver and accuracy provider.

Shown is the finished stand with a DeWalt planer ready to be bolted in place



If you already have a shop full of tools, the job is even easier.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

I started building my workstation by having Lowe's cut the 2-by-6s to 4-foot lengths, allowing me to carry all parts home in my car. The 2-by-2-foot top is sanded 3/4-inch plywood, right off the shelf. If a bottom shelf is desired, pick up a 2-by-2-foot piece of 1/4-inch sanded plywood. Cut that to fit inside the legs.

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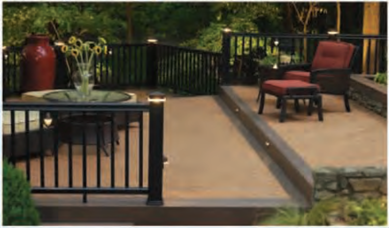

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The 1-by-4 braces are whitewood. Buy 6- or 8-foot pieces. Use the 6-foot if carrying the wood in a car, 8-foot with a pickup. The top brace is 22 inches long. The bottom is 19 inches long. The 2-by-4 leg braces on the bottom are fastened inside the legs to support a shelf if desired, while the top braces are outside the legs to add support for the top.

Tool requirements include a miter saw, a square, a drill, two drill bits, a couple of driver bits for screws, and a wrench to tighten hex bolts used for assembly. Toss in an impact driver to ease running screws in at the later stages. The stand is designed to be constructed from nominal lumber sizes, so the only cutting needed is to final lengths and angles. Standard 3-1/2-by-5/16-inch hex-head bolts are used, with nuts and washers right out of the bins.

Carefully select the lumber. Construction lumber is rough when good, awful when poor.

FRAMING UP

Step one, after buying wood and fasteners, is to square one end on each 2-by-6 to have a starting point. If you prefer, ends can first be cut to 10 degrees, the angle that stabilizes the legs front to rear when the stand is in use. The slight leg splay does a great job of preventing tip-over, even when fairly long boards are planed. Make sure to cut both angles without flipping the board. The ends look like / /.

Mark a 2x6 at 37 or 38 inches.

Cut it square at the mark.

Set the miter saw at 10 degrees and carefully lock.

With four legs cut to correct length, the next cuts are the 2-by-4 side braces. (The length of the legs is 31-1/4 inches: If you're shorter than about 5 feet, 10 inches, cut 1 inch off; if

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H3OF2

Make the first angle cut.

Make the first leg cut.

you're taller than 6 feet, 1 inch, then add 1 inch.) The top brace is 20-7/8 inches long, cut to a 10-degree angle at each end, this time with the angles resulting in a shorter piece, not a slanted piece. For this, you flip the 2-by-4, so the ends are / \. Cut two top braces. Cut the bottom brace to 28 inches long at its bottom, again with the 10-degree slants at both ends, resulting in a shorter top—26-3/4 inches here. Again, the ends are / \.

Clear a decent sized work area, and lay out the first three pieces for lumber. Align the top piece with the legs so the 10-degree splay is going to be at the bottom. Align carefully together and mark for bolt holes in the first 2-by-4, making sure it is securely clamped to the 2-by-6 under it. Mark for three bolt holes, in a triangle pattern, keeping hole centers at least 3/4 inch inside lumber edges. Drill all three holes in the first clamped-together piece, as the photos show. Drilling depth is near maximum bit length here, so back the bit out and tap it lightly to free it of debris, and to let heat dissipate a little for each hole. Use a 5/16" drill bit. A light hammer tap or two gets the bolts into their holes this

Measure the final length carefully.

Mark the length of the second piece from 2x6.

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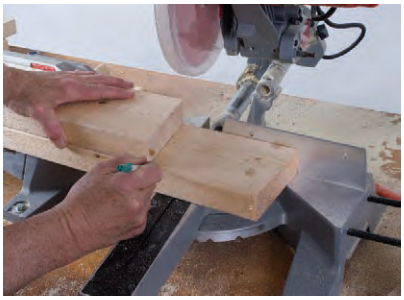

Use the first leg as a template for the final length for all.

Make the second leg cut.

Cut the second leg.

Cut a 2x4 at the 10-degree angle.

way. Alignment is better with tighter holes. Rigidity is improved, too.

Bolt the first pieces together, using a washer under both the head and nut. Snug up the nuts, but not to final tightness. Now, move on to the second leg. Use shim stock to make up for the bolt ends lifting the first leg a bit, align, clamp and drill. Bolt together as before, making sure to use washers on both sides.

Turn the leg set over. Square it with the top of your workbench.

Measure up 10 inches from the bottom of each leg and align the lower brace to the inside of the leg. Clamp securely in place, and mark for the bolt holes, again in a triangle

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pattern; three at each end. Drill. Place the bolts with washers, then add nuts with washers, and finger-tighten firmly.

Assemble the second set of legs in exactly the same manner.

The 1-by-4 braces come next. Mark 3/4 inch inward from the edge, and then 2-1/4 inches inward, and drill pilot holes. Now, align with the top brace and leg, and screw into place. Note the use of square-drive screws, with pan heads. The reason is simple: The screws were in the shop, and I'd forgotten to buy wood screws of the correct length. It is also a 24-mile round trip to a hardware store.

The first set of legs gets all four side braces installed. It's then reasonably easy to snug the second set of legs inside the braces,

Watch for ink that might block your mark.

The 1x4s are all cut square.

Use the first piece as a template for the second.

Mark for holes, clamp carefully and drill.

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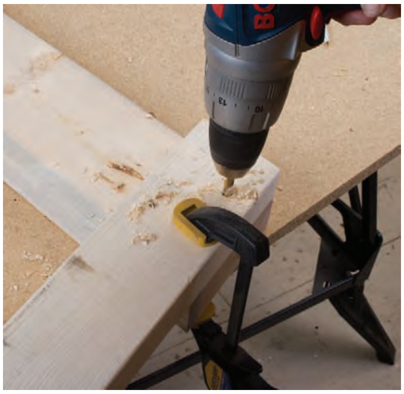
while the stand is upright on the floor. Run the screws in. The Ryobi impact driver is a good wrist and forearm saver with this many screws to drive—32 on the braces, plus 10 to hold the top in place. It saves time as well as effort.

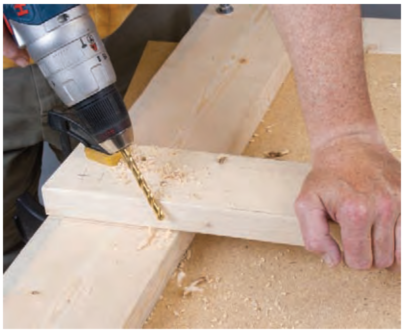
Settle the stand on the floor and snug up the nuts and bolts all around. There's no need to wrench them down tight. A moderately tight fit does just fine without crushing too many wood fibers.

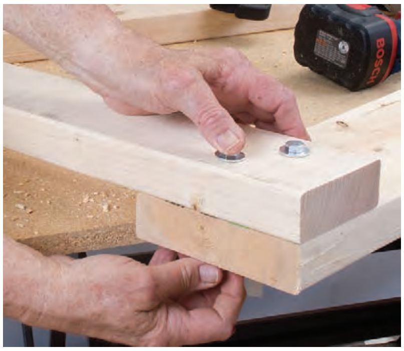
There should be no need for lock washers, either. If it's necessary, one of the mid-range grades of Loctite works just fine instead, and doesn't force a step into 4-inch bolt lengths. The 3-1/2-inch long hex-head bolts



Good, solid clamping keeps the holes aligned.

Remove the bit from the hole, tap lightly to clean and finish drilling.





Bolt the first leg top before drilling the second leg.

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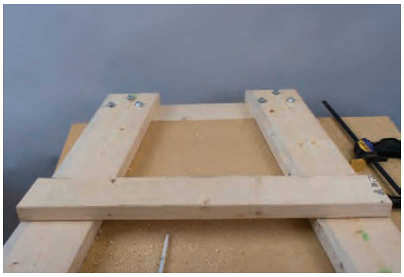
offer just enough length to get through 3 inches of wood, with room for a flat washer and the nut.

For nuts and bolts and washers, go for a good grade that is zinc-plated. More weatherproofing, such as double galvanizing, is not needed for indoor tools. Stainless steel is a waste of money, too.

Bolt the first leg in place before further drilling.

Shim stock levels the second hole sites.



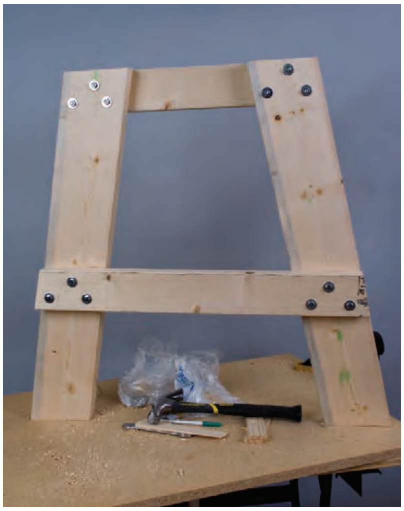
A stretcher goes inside the leg set.

TABLE TOP

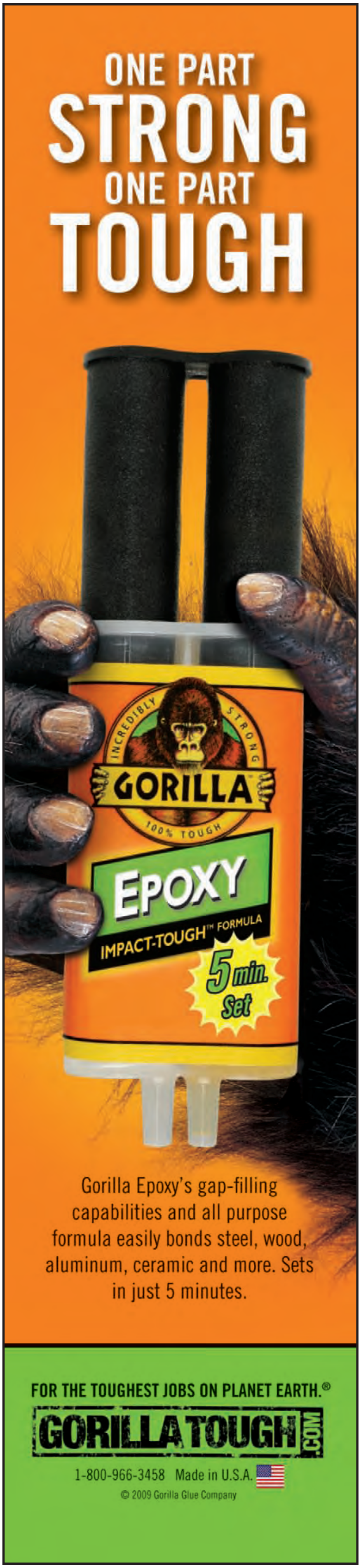
Finally, add the top. The 2-by-2-foot sheet of 3/4-inch plywood provides a lip on each side of 1 inch. From the edge of the plywood, measure in 1-3/4 inch and

Mark, clamp and drill as on the top cross piece.

Use washers on both head and nut sides.



Shown is the assembled leg set from inside.



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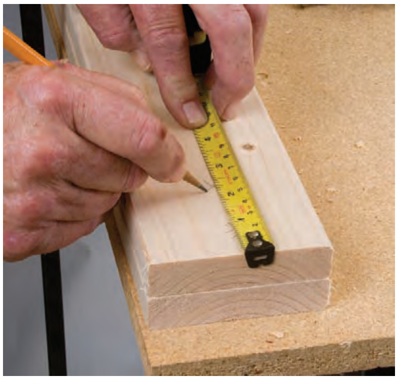
mark a line for pilot holes. Space them equally along the sheet, start at about 3 inches from each end. Use five screws per side.

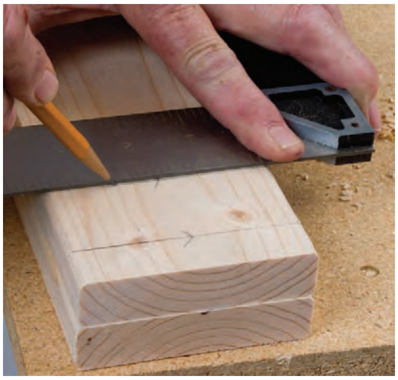
Run the screws in. Stand back and take a look at the site of your benchtop planer (or jointer, or bandsaw or drill press). If you decide to use this stand for a small bandsaw, I suggest building a box on top of the top, about 5 to 8 inches tall, open at the ends. This elevates the bandsaw to a useful height, while also providing some blade storage.

To add a shelf, use 1/4-inch sanded plywood, cut to width. Measure the inside of the stand just above the bottom braces. Cut the plywood to length. Fasten in place with four 1-inch flathead power-drive screws on each side.

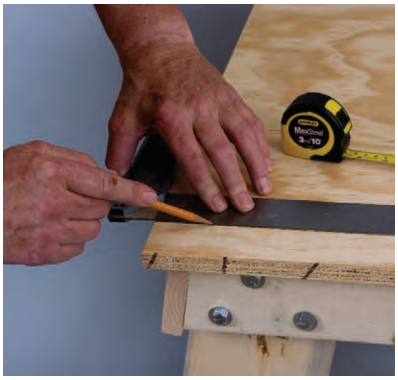
The stand isn't pretty—after all, this is construction lumber, made to be used inside walls. But it will outlast a couple of portable planers. **EHT**



Pilot holes are required to take screws into each 2x6 end.



Use a square to draw lines for the pilot holes. Drill the pilot holes.



Lay out the pilot holes through the top and into the frame.

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ROCK

TOP

POURING AND FINISHING AN EXPOSED AGGREGATE WALKWAY

By Larry Walton

One of my favorite home projects is building a new concrete walkway. It could be because I grew up on the west side of the Coast Range in Oregon where rainfall can reach 200 inches in a year. With conditions like these, it doesn't take many foot falls for sod to become mud. Whether you are walking around the garage to roll the trash bins out to the street or you're headed out to the green house, you'll have an appreciation for a new concrete walkway.

Anytime you do concrete work you have the privilege of choosing the type of finish the new concrete will have. Exposed aggregate can be a good choice, especially if you are matching existing concrete or making a purposeful contrast to another finished surface.

Aggregate is the sand and gravel part of the concrete mix. It's what the cement bonds to, and it gives the concrete substance and strength. Smooth, stamped or broomed concrete hides the larger pieces of gravel below the surface. The exposed aggregate method removes the top fine layer so individual gravel pieces are visible on the surface.

With the exception of the concrete mix you order, the setup for exposed aggregate is the same as with other finishes. "There's nothing in particular you have to do, whether it's broomed, stamped or exposed," says Matt Villers of Washington-based Concrete Specialties Inc. (CSI). All of the standard concrete walkway steps apply.

CONCRETE BASICS

Anytime you are building a walkway, consider the lay of the land and how water will run off. For proper drainage you'll need a 1/4 inch of fall for every foot of walkway. For example, one side of a 4-foot wide walk should be 1 inch lower than the other side in the direction that carries water away from any structures. Most of the time water will drain into a lawn, flower bed or driveway.

Fine grading, forming and pouring for exposed aggregate concrete is very similar to other finishing methods.

Unless code requirements dictate otherwise, walkways should have 3-1/2 inches of compacted rock base under 3-1/2 inches of concrete. This thickness means you can use 2-by-4s for form boards. You may wish to use 2-by-6 form boards to produce a 5-1/2-inch thick walkway section for areas that will be driven on, such as where the walkway intersects a driveway.

When you place your concrete order with the ready-mix plant, tell them you are pouring exposed aggregate.

Keep back-fill behind the forms at a minimum because you'll

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strip the forms early. You also need to make provision for cement-laden water to drain away from the walkway as the aggregate is being exposed by washing.

THE POUR

As with any concrete pour, make sure you have everything ready before the truck arrives. Forms should be complete. You'll need rubber boots, shovels, wheelbarrow, screed rod, bull float, mag float, edge trowel and joint trowel. You'll also need a water hose with good pressure and a spray nozzle that shoots a tight pattern without dripping. I don't do enough concrete work to own a bull float so I rent one.

When you call the ready-mix company to order the concrete, be sure to tell them you want an exposed aggregate mix. They should offer some options in terms of aggregate size. Availability varies but you will

Be consistent in how you handle all the areas of your walkway job.

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RECYCLED CONCRETE BASE

Matt Villers of CSI recommends recycled crushed concrete as a base for exposed aggregate walkways. "When you hose it and wack it, it's almost like you're walking on pavement," says Villers. Translation: When properly applied with water and compacted, recycled concrete makes a very stable sub-base for concrete walkways.

"It's usually 25 to 50 percent less than the cost of crushed rock. Plus, people like to recycle," says Villers.

Ask your ready-mix or sand and gravel company about recycled crushed concrete. Save money while saving the planet.

probably at least have a choice between pea gravel and 3/4-inch, or a mix of the two. The ready-mix company probably has samples you can look at. They'll tell you what they recommend and why.

Once you start pouring, make sure you and your crew are consistent in how you lay down the cement. The aggregate is not exposed until you expose it, which means it's there, but you can't see it until the job is nearly complete. Treating all regions the same ensures consistent results in the finished product.

The aggregate is both gravel and sand, but the concrete mix you ordered for your exposed aggregate job was chosen for the size and shape of the gravel pieces, which, to the naked eye, is the part that will be exposed. How you work the concrete mix when it gets between your form boards may determine how

A bull float is the one tool you may want to rent to do this project.

This Surface Retarder by Golden Pacific is specifically designed for exposed aggregate. It slows the curing process and helps promote even exposure. Golden Pacific recommends using one gallon for 150 sq. ft. of concrete.

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Shawn Joslin adds a joint line to his walkway project.

Keep trowel marks to a minimum when preparing to wash exposed aggregate.

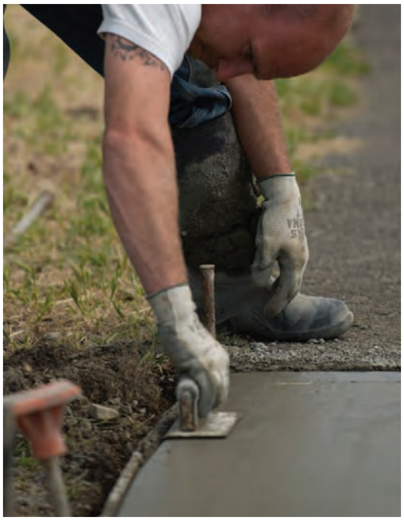
consistent the gravel pattern will be, and to some degree how flat the finished job will be.

As you "rod" the concrete, or in other words, level it with a screed rod (I just use a 2-by-4) as it is being poured, the gravel near the top is being pushed down. This pushing down of the gravel continues during the bull-float process and the mag-float part of the finishing job. As the gravel goes down, the "fines" or "cream" rises, which means you are creating a layer of concrete at the top with sand only as the aggregate. This is a good thing for smooth- and broom-finish jobs, but not so good for exposed because you have to cut deeper to get to the gravel.

As you can imagine, inconsistency in rodding, bull-floating and magging can cause unseen differences in the gravel level within the pour. Unseen, that is, until you start washing the surface.

Therefore, consistency is one of the keys to a good finish job in exposed aggregate. Rod it the same way throughout the pour. Bull-float the entire job in the same direction, with the same number of passes and with about the same pressure. If you have a low spot, sprinkle in more whole concrete mix, don't just rake in some fine material from the top. Try to be consistent throughout with the mag-float, edgers and jointers.

Once the entire job is smooth,



The bullnose shape of an edge trowel helps release the forms, which are removed earlier than usual for washing.

A spray can is the recommended tool for applying surface retarder.

RULES AND REGS

Check on permit and code requirements before beginning your walkway project. If your project is a sidewalk along a public street, there are probably very detailed requirements in width, slope and finishes. Most municipalities specify the angle at which a sidewalk meets a driveway to avoid steep climbs for neighbors with disabilities. Plans must be approved, and often an inspection is required before you pour the concrete.

Community covenants may also be specific about the type of concrete finishes you can use in the areas in front of the house. Often these rules require the use of exposed aggregate for walkways or for driveway borders and bands.

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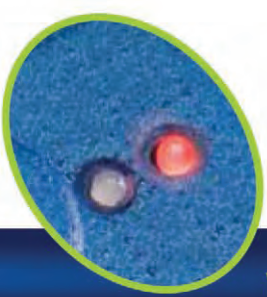

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edged and jointed, you are ready to apply some releasing agent. Commercial chemicals are available, but some old school guys use a mix of molasses and water.

Removing stakes and form boards is an important step in preparing to expose the aggregate. Water must run freely off the edges of the walkway during washing.

EXPOSURE

Next, test for washing. My friend Shawn Joslin pushes on the surface with his finger tips. If he doesn't feel movement in the gravel underneath, he knows it's ready. Villers teaches his guys that it's never too early to start spraying, which is his way of saying "don't be late!"

There is such a thing as too late when it comes to exposing aggregate, and often the difference is how much you want to work. Start it too late and you'll be bringing stiff-bristled brushes

RETHINKING REPAIRS

If you've done much concrete finishing you've probably dealt with fixing a foot print, dropped tool mark or some wayward dog prints before the concrete has set. Normally you just take some extra fines off of the tail of the trowel or from the edges of a form board and fill in the depression—not a good idea for exposed aggregate. If your repair material contains only fine sand and no larger aggregate, the depression will reappear during the washing process. Any fill-ins or repairs must include rocks in order to blend in with the rest of the pour after the aggregate is exposed.

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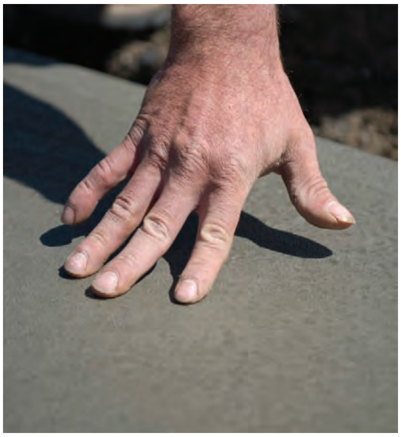

Shawn Joslin tests the concrete for washing. He feels for movement in the aggregate underneath. If it's stable, it's ready.

to the game to help the hose. Get the timing right, and it's almost as easy as washing the driveway.

Test the area where you started pouring and see what it looks like. If you can't avoid blasting gravel out of the walkway, then it's a bit too early. When you can proceed without rolling gravel down the walkway, it's time.

Carefully strip the forms and go for it. Systematically move to the adjacent area as gravel in the impact zone is exposed but not removed. Handle your spray in a way that doesn't create a streaking pattern. Go over the entire

A water hose with good pressure is the preferred method for washing exposed aggregate.

LANDSCAPING AND OTHER HAZARDS

Green (uncured) concrete is susceptible to staining. Be careful not to get mud or landscaping supplies on the new walk. Stains at this point may never come out. Wait 10 days or so before landscaping around your new walkway.

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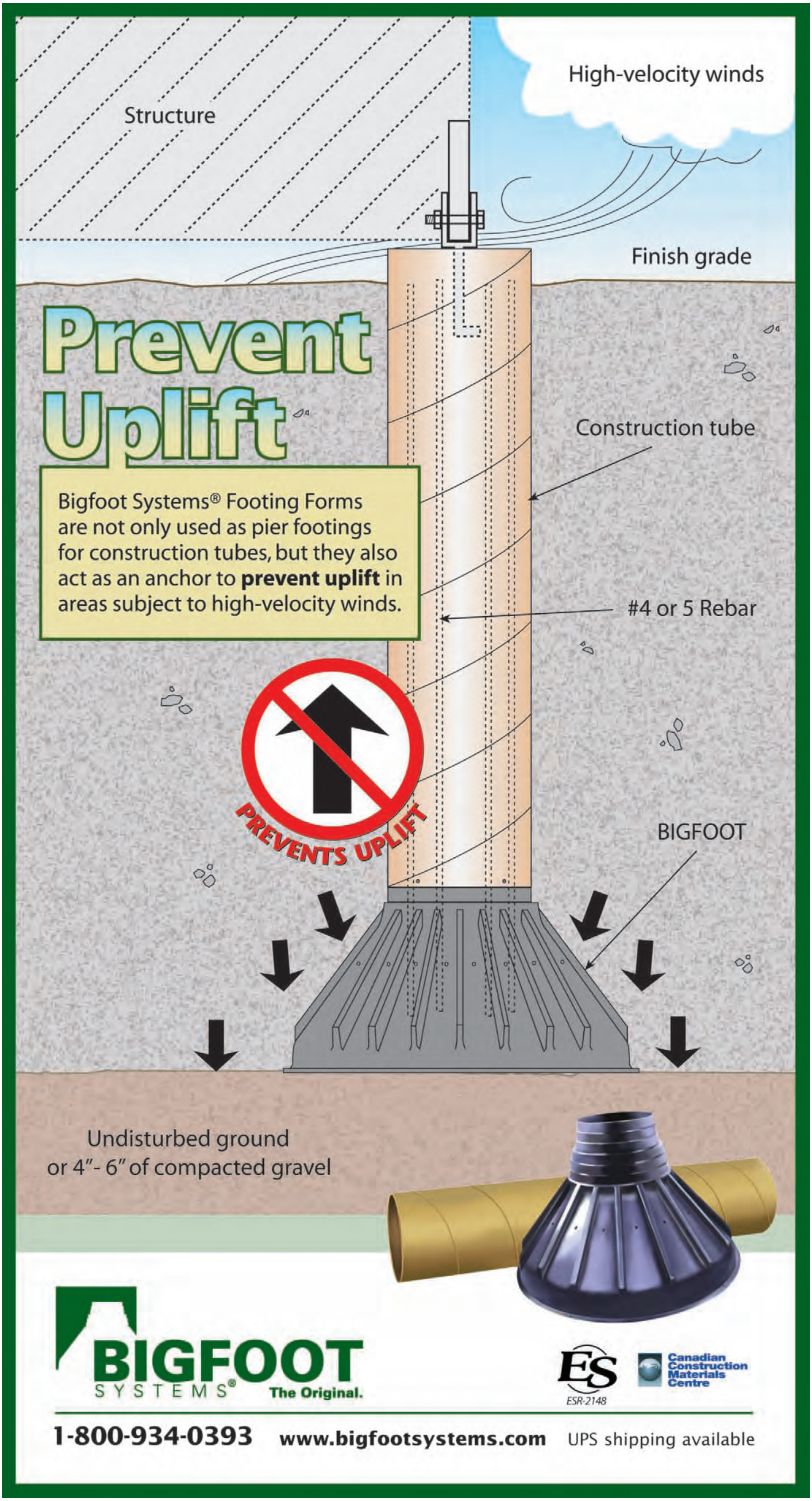
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Tips for Installing Footings

Here are some useful tips to ensure your footings are installed properly and the integrity of your project is maintained:

- You should always make sure that a qualified engineer has designed the footing you are using and that it has been tested by an accredited evaluation firm.
- Select a footing that can carry the weight of your new construction and has met all the proper building codes.
- Ensure you are placing the footing form on solid ground. The more solid the ground the less likely movement will occur.
- Install your footings 4-6 inches below the frost line to avoid potential movement. If you are in an area without frost, the footing form should be placed two feet in the ground and then backfilled to hold it in place when it is being filled with concrete.
- Rebar is an important part of installation. Pour concrete into the footing system first, insert three or four number 4 or 5 rebar rods into the tube. To determine the length of rebar, measure the distance from the top of the tube to the air holes located on the Bigfoot Systems® Footing Form before you place the system in the excavation and backfill.
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project once, and while it is still wet see if you need to feather in any sand spots or clean up cloudy areas.

After it's washed and everything looks consistent, spray on a sealer or curing compound. This is particularly important for exposed aggregate finishes because the washing process can weaken the surface. Villers recommends a good water-based product with low sheen, which has the advantage of being less slippery when wet. Follow the timing and application techniques for the product you select.

As with any concrete project, put up barriers or caution tape to keep traffic off until the walkway has cured for a few days. Exposed aggregate appears to be ready for use right away, so don't expect kids and critters to recognize that it's fresh. **EHT**

Exposing the top layer of gravel without blasting rocks out of the walk is the goal when finishing exposed aggregate concrete. Note how the aggregate can be seen inside this joint, keeping the look consistent.

A close-up view of this exposed aggregate walk looks like loose gravel. I tried dislodging some of these rocks with a key but they were all well bonded in place.

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CROWN MOLDING SIMPLIFIED

Tools and materials that make it easier and faster to install crown molding.

By Matt Weber

Crown molding, also spelled "moulding," is probably the most prominent architectural trim element in a home's interior decor. Crown creates an appealing transition from wall to ceiling that is available in a wide variety of styles and profiles, from simple and economical cove molding to elaborate cornice molding that is built up from multiple shapes and pieces to create an elegant ornamental accent.

Crown molding dramatically enhances the overall interior design, but installing it can be tricky. The project requires lots of measuring, lots of nailing, and tricky applications such as cutting the molding "upside down and backwards" on the miter saw. This article will show how to install paint-grade crown molding using a variety of new tools and materials that make the job as painless as possible.

PRECISION MEASURING MADE EASY

In the past I've installed a crown with nothing more than a tape measure, but it wasn't easy, especially when working alone. Without a helper, measuring from one corner of a wall to the other is a

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real pain: It requires tacking one end of the tape to the opposite wall, then hauling your stepladder to the other corner, pulling your tape tight and hoping the nail at the other end doesn't jerk away from the drywall. Assuming the nail holds, you then wrestle with the tape to straighten out the inevitable twists and sags so you can eyeball what you hope is close to an accurate measurement. Even measuring with an assistant on the other end of the tape is not as easy as using one of the new precision laser range finders on the market.

For this project, I used the new Bosch DLR165K Digital Laser Range Finder. Here's what's involved with taking an accurate wall-to-wall measurement using the kit: Point. Press button. Done. Talk about an irreplaceable time saver and the best friend of the solo worker, the DLR165K is among my new favorite tools for crown installation and much more. With a range of 165 feet and accuracy to within 1/16 inch, the DLR165K uses a laser pointer to aim the tool at the spot to be measured. Then, with the push of a button you have the exact measurement recorded in digital readout, and you're ready for a trip to the saw to cut the molding to match. And the measurements are always true, unlike those unreliable (and useless) sonar range finders of yesteryear. The DLR165K measures in feet and inches, decimal feet and metric, and can calculate area and volume (www.boschtools.com).

EXTRA "HANDS" WITH CROWN HANGERS

As I mentioned, I often work alone. So, in the past I've improvised an ill-advised method of hanging lengths of molding that involves nails placed along the ceiling and lengths of string looped around the trim sticks. The idea was to hook the string on the nails in order to temporarily hold the trim at the ceiling while I zapped it in with a nail gun. Well, that took extra time, and I always had great difficulty hooking the strings to the nails. And once hooked, the strings had a tendency to then come unhooked, with the molding crashing to the floor. And even when it did work, the stick of molding was still never positioned exactly where I wanted it.

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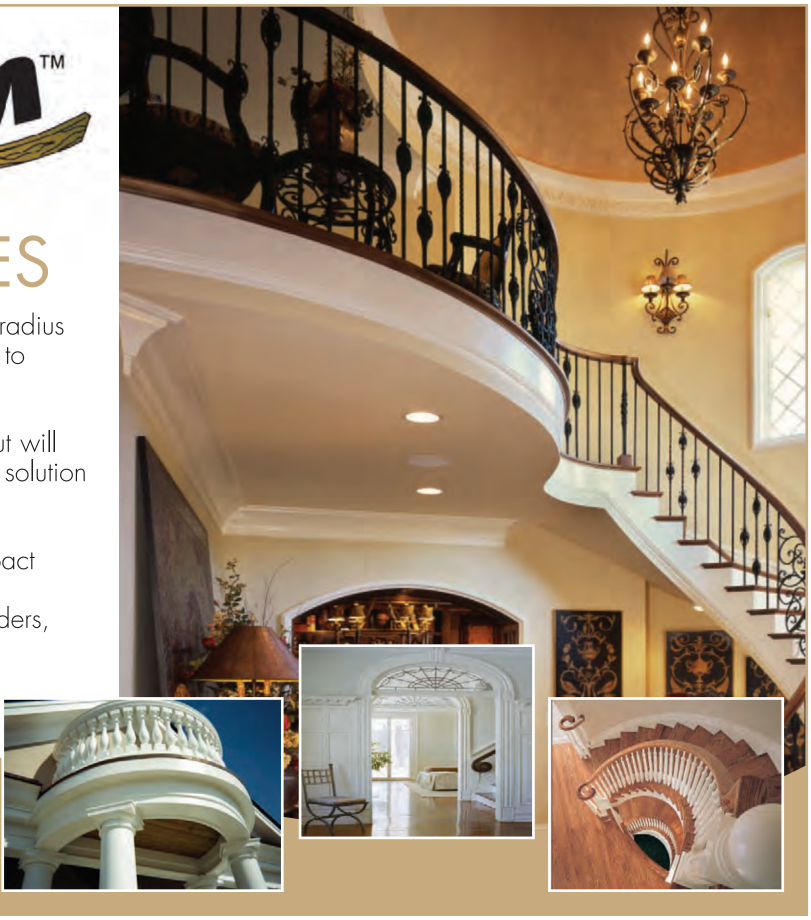

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Thankfully, Magna Industries offers another must-have item for the solo crown installer—Crown Hangers. When you have no extra hands to hold the molding while you nail it, the Crown Hangers can serve as a substitute. Simply tack a couple of nails about 6 feet apart just below the ceiling. Hook the Crown Hangers on the nails—they're sold two per set. Then, hang the stick of molding on the two brackets. You can then adjust each of the hangers by sliding the brackets upward and finger-tightening with a lock nut, which positions the molding against the ceiling, ready for fastening. It's like having a silent, underpaid assistant (www.crownhanger.com).

NAIL IT FAST AND EASY

Although the patient installer can certainly hang crown molding with a hammer, finishing nails and a trusty nail set, I am not a patient installer. I'm a firm advocate of pneumatic power and a reliable nail gun. Compared to slinging a hammer, nail guns operate at light speed, they

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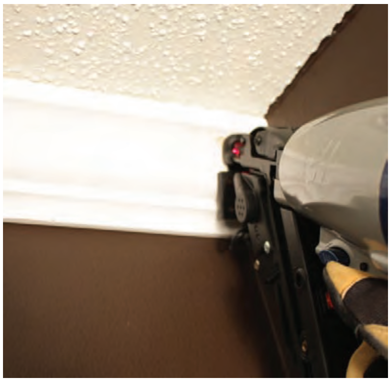
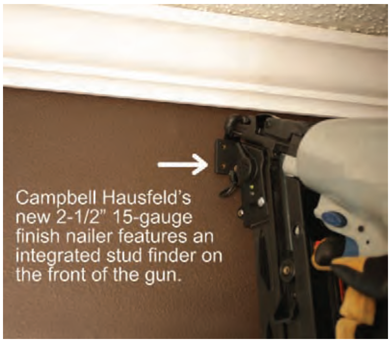
spare you the problem of bent nails and smashed thumbs, and they're simply easier to use by having the collated nails loaded in the chamber rather than requiring repeat trips to a box of singles.

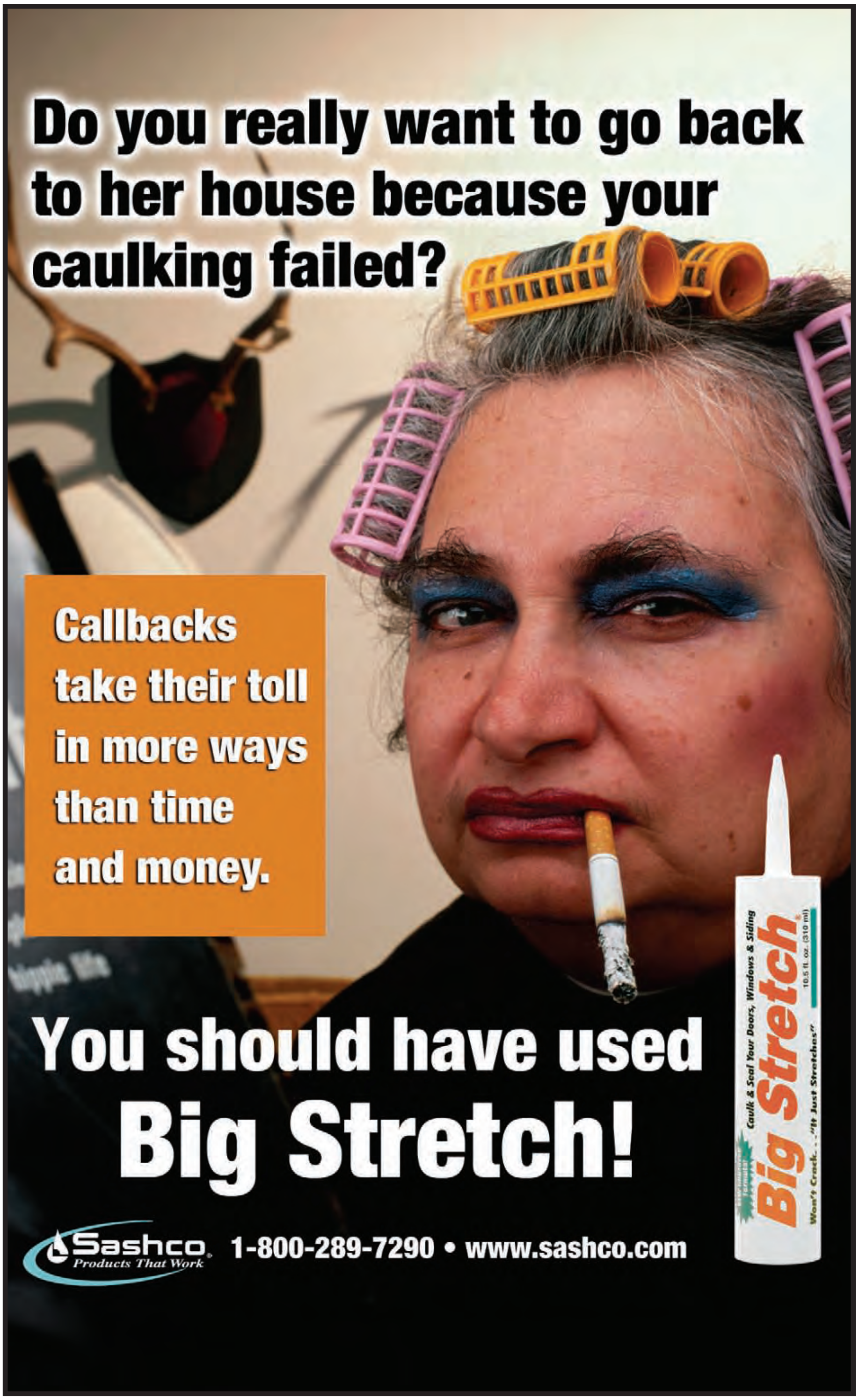
Campbell Hausfeld's new 2-1/2-inch finish nailer comes with some nifty features to expedite a molding project for the DIY homeowner. At the nailing tip, the gun features a built-in laser marker to help with accurate nail placement.

To adequately support crown molding, the nails must be fastened into the wall studs, and Campbell Hausfeld's new finish nailer also features an electronic stud finder integrated into the gun to locate the framing members. I also like the soft no-mar tip that protects the tip of the gun—which must be pressed against the molding to activate





Campbell Hausfeld's new 2-1/2" 15-gauge finish nailer features an integrated stud finder on the front of the gun.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the nailing action—from leaving those annoying little dents in the surface that many other air nailers create. Additionally, the new 2-1/2-inch nailer won't dry-fire, meaning the gun won't leave an unnecessary hole in the molding when it runs out of nails. This means less repair work spent filling holes and sanding the filler (www.chnailers.com).

CUT IT LIKE YOU'LL SEE IT

The traditional method of cutting crown molding is a bit of a mindbender. When cutting crown molding on a miter saw, you typically have to cut it upside-down and backwards, so the saw's base represents the ceiling and the saw's fence represents the house wall. With 45-degree inside corners, the cut should be made so the lower, longer point of the molding (when positioned on the wall) meets the mark you made for the molding strip's overall length. For outside corners, the opposite is true. If you're already confused, then you'll probably make a mistake

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when cutting, and those mistakes not only waste molding but also time.

Fortunately, the *EHT* staff discovered a new jig for the miter saw that allows installers to cut crown molding upright, just like it installs on the wall. The new "right side up" cutting orientation of Milescraft's new Crown45 jig greatly simplifies crown molding installation. It features an adjustable angle setting with accessory angle finders to find and set the appropriate spring angle for the most common molding styles (38, 45 and 52 degrees). There's also an indented cutting face to accommodate detailed dentil-style molding. The wide cutting surface can handle moldings between 2 and 5-1/2 inches, and the jig collapses for compact, easy storage. The Crown45 simplifies an otherwise convoluted cutting application (www.milescraft.com).

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Choosing a quality tape is one of those details that DIY painters often overlook. I've opted to use cheap tape in the past, and in doing so I've spent a lot of extra time and paint correcting the problems caused by paint bleeding through the poorly sealed mask. For this project we used Frog Tape, which is a specially formulated painter's tape that forms a chemical bond with the wall surface. Using Paintblock technology, Frog Tape is a patented crepe tape that forms a micro barrier along the edges of the paint when it comes in contact with latex paint. Unlike standard masking

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* Material and labor costs are based on a field study conducted in June 2009 and represent the average material and labor costs of the participants; figures have been rounded. For complete detailed information regarding the study, visit www.fypon.com.

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tape, which can easily lose its adhesion, the edge barrier of the Frog tape prevents bleeding for crisp, clean paint lines. Frog Tape is available in 24-, 36-, and 48-millimeter widths (www.frogtape.com).

MITERLESS MOLDING

The ability to skip the entire mitering process for crown molding is an enormous time-saver. Fypon offers a miterless crown molding system that utilizes corner blocks instead of miter cuts at each joint. This means the installer only has to make square cuts on the molding, so there's no need to measure an angle, no need to think "upside-down and backwards," and each cut can be made with the molding simply placed flat on the base of the miter saw. With this system, you can even cut the molding with a miter box and a hand saw (www.fypon.com).

Additionally, as an alternative to wood, the Fypon miterless system is made of urethane, which resists mildew, insects, warping and splintering, so it can be used indoors or out. And, although we used the system for an indoor application, urethane still has its benefits. Each piece has a consistent quality and finish that requires no additional priming or sealing. In fact, each piece comes pre-coated with a double-primed, exterior-grade ultraviolet stable coating. It can be painted, stained and faux finished, and the material is lighter and more flexible than wood trim, so it's easier to maneuver the sticks around the jobsite, especially if you're working alone.

To install the miterless system, begin as usual by drawing a simple layout of the room and calculating the quantities of materials you'll need. Pay specific attention to the corners because when ordering you must specify the exact number of corner blocks, and whether they should be oriented as outside or inside corners.

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Photos Courtesy, Modello Stencils and Skimstone, Rudd Company..

With the materials on site, begin one run of molding by applying a bead of urethane-based construction adhesive to the rear and upper surface of the corner block. Press the block into position at the wall/ceiling transition and nail it securely through the recessed areas of the corner piece. Proceed around the room installing all the inside and outside corner blocks in the same manner.

Next, measure the lengths of molding that fit between the corner blocks. To ensure a snug fit, add 1/8-inch to every 5 feet of molding. Check the fit before installing. Position the molding so it closely follows the profile of the corner block, which is slightly larger than the molding to leave a unifrom reveal at the transition. Each block should appear as a slightly larger accent piece at each corner of the layout.

Then, apply a bead of adhesive along the cut edge of each end of molding, as well as on all surfaces that will contact the wall and ceiling. Position the first end against the corner block and fasten in place, moving from one end toward the center. The extra length you allowed will slightly bow the molding, but this will flatten out by pushing the molding againt the wall as you progress down its length, nailing it into the wall studs every 16 inches. Once you reach the center, start at the other corner and work in the opposite direction toward the middle of the molding until it is completely secured.

If it's necessary to join together two lengths of molding in the middle of a wall, the miterless system also comes with divider blocks. Similar to the corner blocks, the divider blocks have the same profile as the molding but are sized a bit larger to work as accent pieces. The lengths of molding can each be cut square and installed right against the flat surface of the blocks. However, if you prefer to avoid the divider blocks, the two joining lengths of molding can be cut with miters at opposite angles and then glued and fastened as a typical scarf joint, as with standard crown molding systems.

SUMMING UP

Crown molding is a fun and rewarding, if challenging, home project. I've completed enough trim-outs to know that I like the end results better than the installation process, so getting the job done faster and easier is the right way to go. These tools and materials are some of the handiest I've found for accomplishing exactly that. I hope you find them useful, too. EHT

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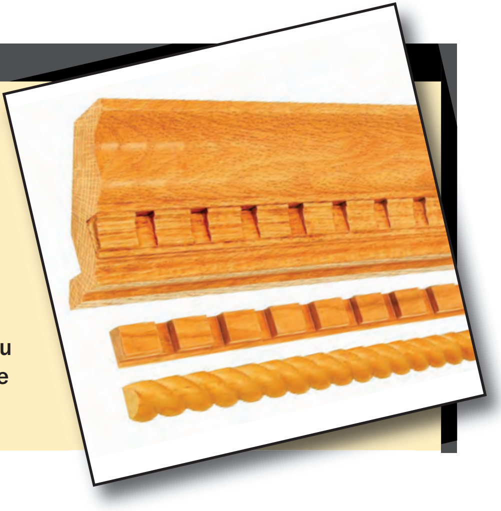
Superior finishes on real wood moldings start with a molding that is milled at appropriate speeds and with ultra sharp tooling. A top-quality molding will also have precisely the same dimensions run after run, ensuring no discrepancies that result in mismatched joints. During the manufacture of its molding, Elias Woodwork uses no diamond tooling, which basically grinds the material to shape. Instead, the Elias process uses only Tangtung and high-speed steel (unless the wood species will not allow). The edges of these two materials are much keener and therefore provide a better cut that requires far less sanding and allows stains and finishes to penetrate more evenly. It's the kind of thing you can expect from a woodworking company owned and run by engineers. For more information, call 1-800-665-0623 or visit www.eliaswoodwork.com



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CLAIMS	**REALITIES**	**FACTS**
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Plastic & attractive wood cabinet	Most major competitors cabinets are plastic or have plastic fronts where the heat exhausts	All Wood Cabinet - including remote and fireplace models
WARRANTY		
Three Year Warranty	Read the warranty. Most parts are limited to one year by some competitors	Three year bumper to bumper backed by a fifty-five year old Nebraska Company
HEAT		
More heat	Some have no copper at all. Others only 5.9 to 12 oz. therefore they cannot produce as much heat or hold it as long as the SUNHEAT which makes competitor's models less efficient	24 oz. copper acting as a heat sink produces more heat than any other 1500 watt infrared heater
FAN		
Fan twice as quiet as competitor	None twice as quiet - one is 8 decibels quieter, most have a life expectancy of only 20,000 hours	Quiet fan with sealed ball bearings with an incredible 80,000 hour life expectancy
HEAT TUBES		
20,000 hours	Wiring is very thin with life expectancy approx. 5000 hours. Some heaters have only been on the market one year or less.	6000 plus hours with heavy duty wiring and a three year guarantee easily replaceable by owner
QUALITY		
Good Quality	Electronics located close to heat exhaust with light wiring. Contracted out on a low bid basis to factories that do not specialize in building infrared heaters. For most, this is their first season of building infrared heaters and they are not quality controlled inspected in the U.S.	No electronics close to heat exhaust. All high quality heavy duty components and parts. Designed, engineered and guaranteed by a fifty-five year old Nebraska Company. Built in our own factory under watchful eyes and every heater is inspected in the U.S. by trained quality control inspectors

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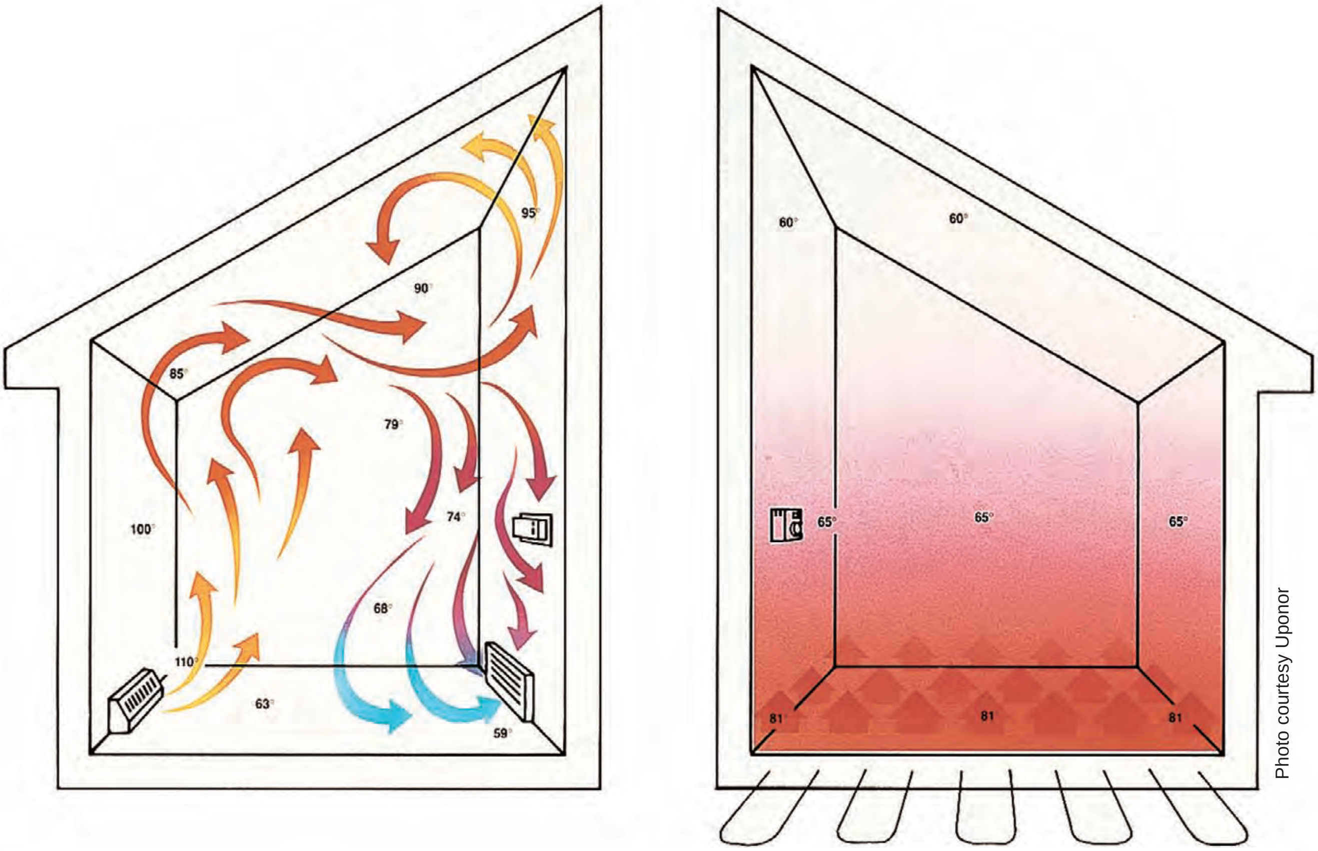

Photo courtesy Uponor

RADIANT HEAT ROUNDUP

HOT PRODUCTS IN UNDERFLOOR HEATING

By editorial staff

The concept of radiant heat is gaining popularity for today's homeowners. Instead of relying solely on noisy forced-air systems or a radiator that creates pockets of hot and cold air throughout the room, these energy-efficient radiant systems heat the floors of a home, which then transfers heat evenly throughout the rest of the room. In addition to eliminating the shock of cold floors on bare feet, the other objects in the room (couches, chairs, etc.) will be heated via the floors, allowing the average temperature of the room to be lower while maintaining a higher level of comfort for the people in it. This allows homeowners to save big on their heating bills. Other benefits of radiant heat include the absence of visible heating components and the quiet operation of the systems. Also, because there's no forced air, the systems do not circulate dust and allergens that can cause respiratory problems.

Beyond interior floor heating, radiant systems have outdoor applications as well, such as installed in a sidewalk or driveway for ice-melting applications to create a safe, slip-free walkway. Some systems can even be installed at the roof line to prevent ice dams. There are several methods of installing radiant heat, including water-based hydronic systems and all-electrical

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systems, and the method you choose will depend heavily on the design of the house and the rooms in which you want to add radiant heat. Here is a roundup of some popular systems currently on the market.

HYDRONIC SYSTEMS MADE EASY

The Radiant Floor Company of Barton, Vermont, designs and builds hydronic radiant heating systems especially for do-it-yourselfers and small contractors. The company has engineered their systems to be straightforward, easy to understand and efficient. The design service is free and includes a Zone Calculation Worksheet that includes heat loss calculations for each zone; pump types and sizes, tube spacing, circuit lengths and the full list of components included in each customer's specific system. Radiant Floor Company technicians work directly with customers to design site-specific radiant floor heating systems tailored to the customers' specific needs.

To help the installation go smoothly, a 37-page Design and Installation Manual, written in non-technical language, is available free of charge. The manual offers an easy-to-understand overview of radiant heat, as well as hands-on methods and techniques for installing a first-rate radiant system. A highly trained technical support team is available 66 hours a week to answer any questions or issues. To learn more, call 1-866-WARM-TOES or visit www.radiantcompany.com.

HEATED TILE IN A SNAP

Last year the *EHT* staff installed a two-component heated tile system for a heated tile floor. The radiant heat component is called QuietWarmth, from MP Global products, which is a system of low-profile, electric underlayments. The wire-embedded underlayment mats line the floor and are butted at the seams to function like a hidden electric blanket beneath the tile. The mats

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–**Bob Heidenreich**, Owner The Deck Store, Apple Valley, MN

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replace typical floating floor underlayments, making the total overall thickness from subfloor to floor surface only around 3/8 inch. QuietWarmth (www.quietwarmth.com) not only deadens impact sound from the hard surface flooring, but it also makes the surface warm enough for bare feet, and assists with heating the room.

Although QuietWarmth can be used beneath a wide variety of flooring materials, we covered it with Avaire Interlocking Tile from CoMc, LLC. Avaire (www.avairefloors.com) is genuine porcelain tile that is permanently attached to a non-skid, sound-deadening grid. This is a floating tile system, so no thinset or cement board is needed, which saves lots of labor. It's so easy, even a first-timer can tile an entire room in a single day, because the tile simply clicks together with a little help from a mallet and block. Just add the flexible grout, and the floor is complete. The end result is a

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Although not a radiant heating system, ECO-heaters offer out-of-the-way wall mounting for an economic way of providing efficient single-room convection heating. Whereas radiant heat warms the objects in the room, convection heat warms the air in the room. With this system, heat is mainly generated behind the ECO-heater in the space between the panel and the wall, which leads to an efficient up-draft of heat circulated into the room. This principle of convection means that about 90 percent of the heat comes from the back of the panel, while only 10 percent is radiated from the front of the panel. This form of "background" heating is not only very economical, but also safe and efficient. ECO-heaters are designed as an alternative to conventional space heaters and other systems that use large amounts of electricity. It operates using the same electricity as four 100-watt light bulbs, while heating an entire room. ECO-heaters save on floor space, they're safe to use around children and pets, and can be painted to match any décor with water-based Latex paint. ECO-heaters are also designed to be left on for long periods of time, giving you comfortable background heat at a low cost.

This is similar in concept to a central heating system, yet far less expensive. ECO-heaters are UL-listed, International Safety Standards-approved and come with a 2-year warranty. Learn more at www.eco-heater.com.

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they need now, and offers the flexibility to include additional components later. It features Cat5 wiring for simple plug-in installation and setup, saving time and eliminating complexity, and is designed to routinely perform two-way communications throughout the network, eliminating the need to program each system component separately. The Network System also offers web access for control from a remote location. Additionally, the recessed design of the wall thermostat and sensor ensures these components are less obtrusive on the wall to better flow with the home's décor (www.uponor.com).

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STEP WARMFLOOR FOR LOW-VOLTAGE HEATING

STEP Warmfloor from Electro Plastics, Inc., is another radiant system the *EHT* staff has first-hand experience installing, thanks to a recent bathroom remodel. This system utilizes a series of energy-efficient, patented electro-plastic elements that is distinctly different from most other electric systems. According to the manufacturer, STEP Warmfloor is also the only low-voltage, self-regulating system available. Operating at only 24 volts, the system's self-regulating feature draws only the required energy to maintain an ideal temperature.

STEP Warmfloor is available in easy-to-install kits, with everything you need for installation, including: the heating elements,

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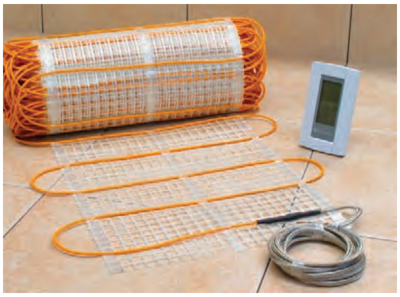
Your kit includes a flooring layout diagram as well as full instructions. The product was developed in 1981 and is still made in the USA. For more information, visit www.warmfloor.com.

RADIANT HEAT FOR TILE, STONE AND MARBLE

ThermoTile is an electric radiant flooring that is suited for tile, marble, stone or porcelain floors, but can be installed under any surface when embedded in thinset mortar. This product is constructed of fiberglass mesh with a factory-mounted 1/8-inch-thick heating cable. This is an installation-friendly system in which the 10-foot armored and grounded lead wires are pre-attached to one end of the 1-1/2-foot wide radiant floor heating mat. There's no need to worry about where the in-floor heating mat ends, because you simply cut the mesh and turn it any way to fit your floor space.



According to the manufacturer, ThermoTile radiant floor heating systems are manufactured, unlike any other electric floor heating system, with both a current return wire to cancel the electromagnetic field (EMF), as well as an inner foil wrap

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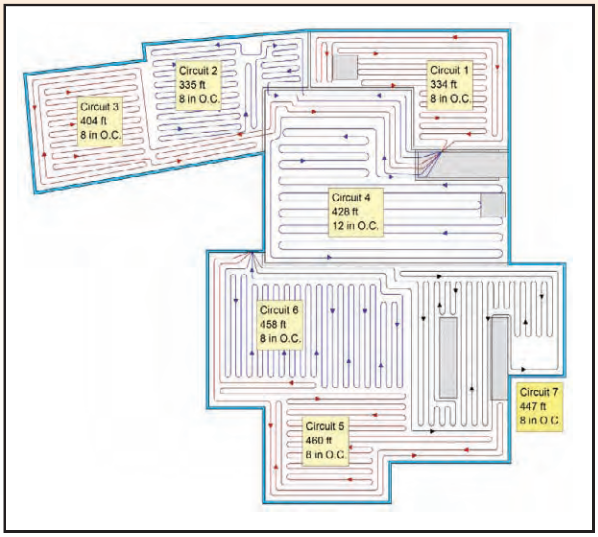
Circuit 2
335 ft
8 in O.C.
Circuit 1
334 ft
8 in O.C.
Circuit 3
404 ft
8 in O.C.
Circuit 4
428 ft
12 in O.C.
Circuit 6
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447 ft
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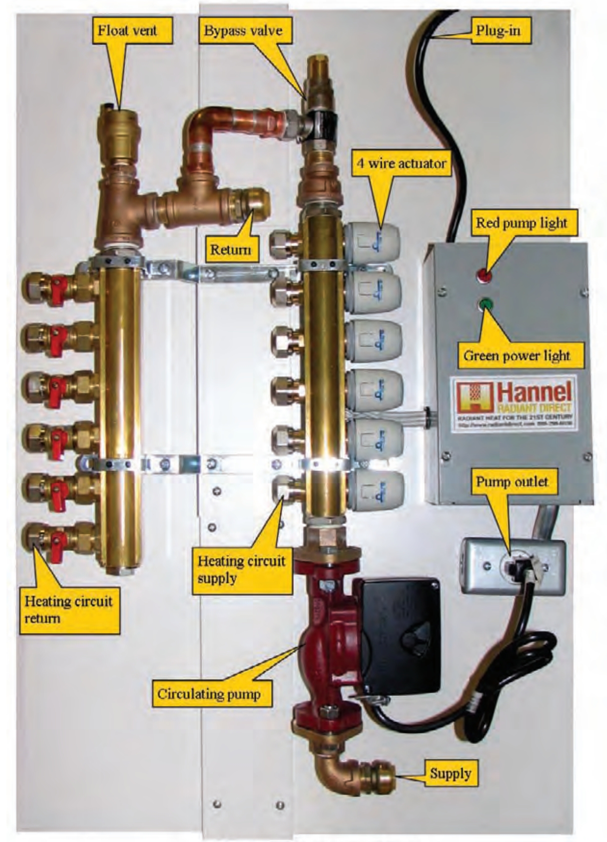
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Most hydronic radiant heating systems are controlled by on/off thermostats activating zone valves or pumps. These thermostats are not able to provide maximum energy savings because they are usually inaccurate and reactive in nature. Even after they turn off, the thermal mass of the heating system will tend to overheat the space.

As an alternative, an outdoor reset controller anticipates what is going to happen inside the building by constantly monitoring changes in the outdoor temperature. Based on this information, the controller adjusts the water temperature according to a reset curve. When it's colder outside, the water temperature is higher. When it's milder outside, the water temperature is lower. This results in a much more accurate indoor climate that does not overheat. By maintaining a more stable temperature the indoors can typically be kept a couple of degrees cooler without discomfort. For each degree reduction over a season, the homeowner will see 2-1/2-percent energy savings.

Plus, a modern outdoor reset controller should have all the functions needed to achieve maximum energy savings, such as a clock and calendar for night setback and holiday schedules. Lowering the heating water temperature at night is one of the surest ways to save energy. For more information on outdoor reset controls, visit www.pexheat.com. **EHT**

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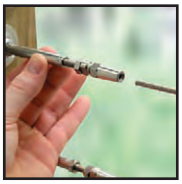
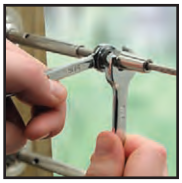
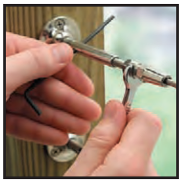


Step 1
Fully seat wire rope.



Step 2
Tighten cone onto receiver



Step 3
Rotate body to tension wire rope.

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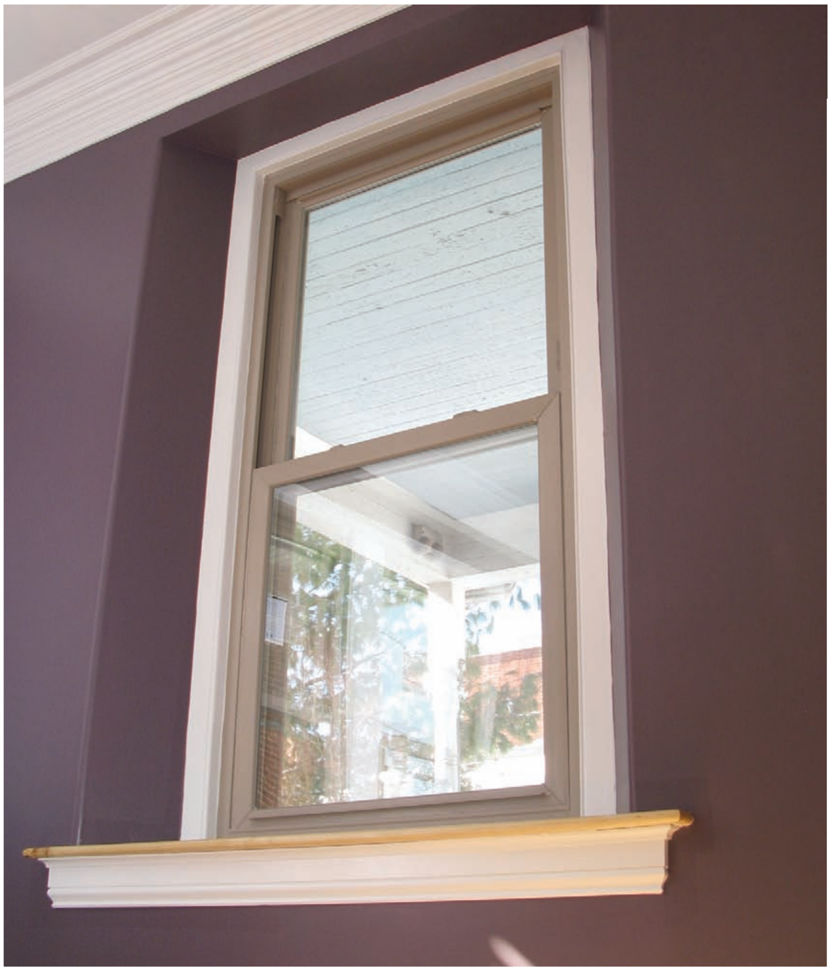
ADD FLARE WITH TRIMLESS WINDOWS



Flaring the windows delivers depth and mass, and the lack of casing leaves more room for ceiling trim.

By Mark Clement

A benefit of working on old houses is that I get to see how they used to do it. Sometimes that's good, other times the phrase "They don't build 'em like they used to—thank God!" comes to mind.

One good design trick in these older homes is trimless windows. In other words, instead of wood jambs and casing, I flare and bullnose my window returns using drywall and cornerbead. Now, this isn't some cheap, money-saver disguised as a fancy technique because it takes some effort—and the payoff is terrific!

Prepare for design mumbo-jumbo: Flaring the windows delivers depth and mass without making a window feel like a tunnel through the wall. It also makes modest rooms feel much bigger. Another ROI (return on investment) is that the top of the window terminates in a soffit with no casing. That means there's about 3-1/2 more inches between the top of the window and the ceiling. These extra inches allow room for larger, more elaborate crown molding above the windows. The end result is a room that transforms from a boring box to a stately room.

The first step is a window worth trimming out in the first place. As part of this room's overhaul, I installed Simonton's new Driftwood replacement windows. The color is pleasant and muted on both the interior and exterior and enables me to really play with exciting wall colors. White would work too, but the benefit here is that I have a choice.

I might have had it easy in this project because the room was

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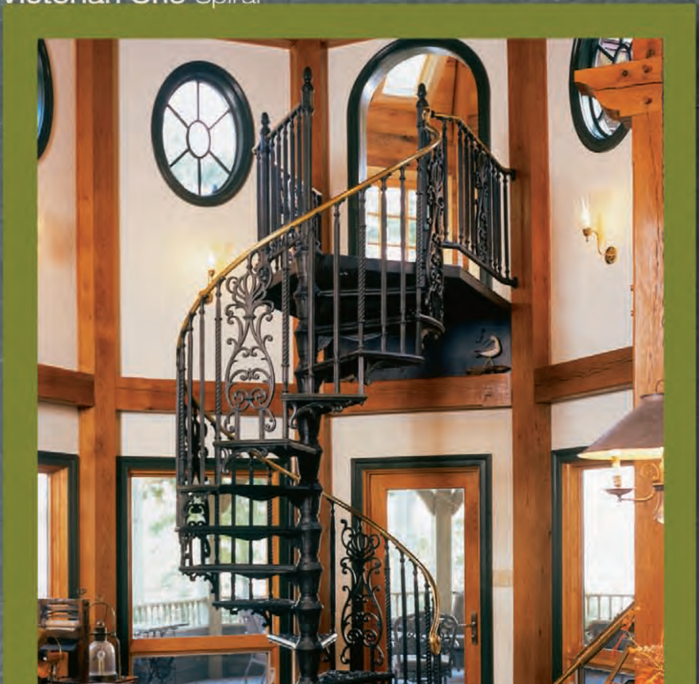

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gutted, so I had to reframe the walls. If you're re-detailing a stick-built house (and/or not gutting the room) to accommodate this detail, at the minimum you'll have to consider widening the opening to accept the flare. This could mean re-framing a few king studs, jacks and the header. You can also experiment with a more shallow flare, too. This window opening, so you have a frame of reference, has a rough opening about 6 inches wider than the window on each side—this amounts to a 16-degree flare on each side.

EXISTING TRIM DETAILS

On this house, the window-weight shafts had a simple trim detail that I chose to keep. Should you find this on your project, here's how I dealt with it:

I used the existing molding on the window-weight shafts to layout and mark the new sill (1-by-10 knotty pine; the pine adds just a hint of earthy texture and color in the finished product). And, to minimize notching a finished piece, I map out the sill and install it now, using the drywall to hide the ends. I let the ears of the sill into the field of the wall drywall. This usually takes a few steps to scribe it right, which is why I use a scrap board to make the pattern.

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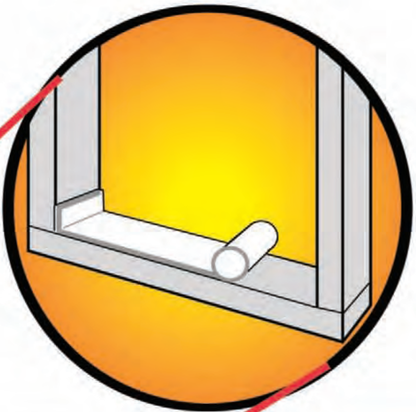

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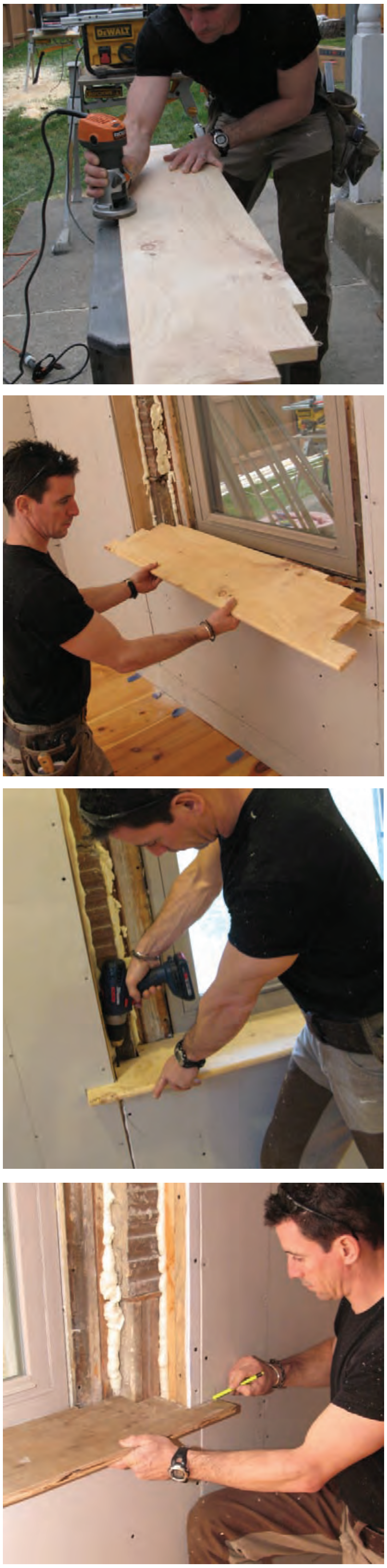


Scribe the sill. Cut it out. Test the fit and install.

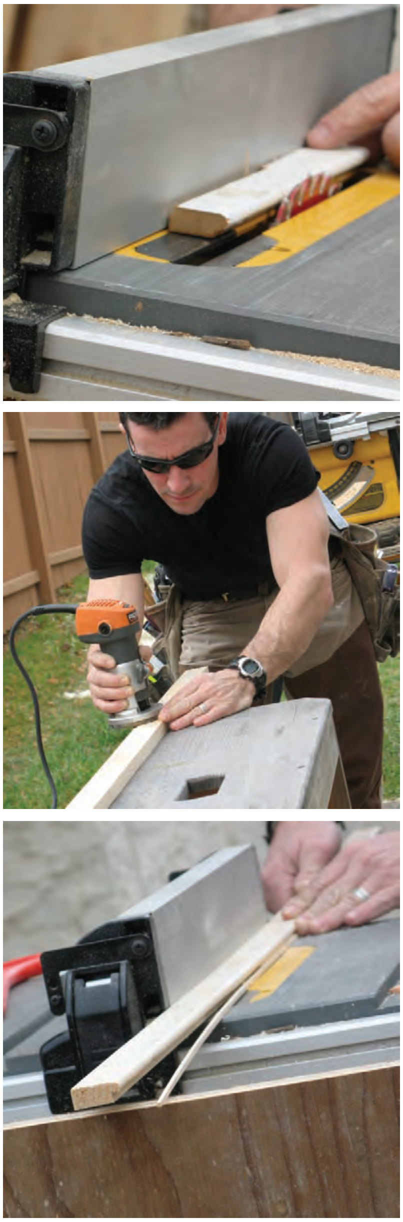
Once the template fits, I transfer it to the finished piece and cut. I then rout a bullnose on the top and bottom of the front three edges. It's worth mentioning that, theoretically, I'd stop here to sand and urethane the sill to protect it during installation. The reality of progress, however, T-bones that notion like a Hummer hitting a Hyundai, so I keep building.

Now that the sill is scribed I can remove existing window-weight shaft casing. On this house, it's 1/2 inch stock with a beaded window stop.

Remove the existing trim.

For a house-sized project I'd buy the parts and simply size them as needed on site like any other trim. I planned to do that for this room because my lumber yard's trim catalogue calls the beaded molding a "stock" item. Of course, what they meant to say was "special order." Long story short, I used a table saw to mill it on site from 1/2-inch base molding stock. Layout Tip: Forget measuring. Use the piece itself as a gauge to set your table saw.

Also, a premium blade like Freud's Fusion really cuts down on the swirl marks that most construction blades leave. Finally, getting a bead this tight on 1/2-inch stock doesn't work without a router table. So, all I did was cut the bead on 3/4-inch stock and rip the back-side off later. The chamfer on the fascia matches the window's flare—16 degrees.



Cut new trim pieces. Use the originals as gauges to set up your saw; use a nice blade to minimize cutting marks.

For a double window, I mill a 1-by-8 down to a 1/2-by-8 for the

I use a thickness planer to mill 1/2" stock for a double window's center mullion.

center mullion using the thickness planer. Multiple passes, knocking off no more than 1/16 inch per pass, is the way to go.

The next phase is to simply install the pieces.

Install the new pieces of beaded molding.

GOOD-BYE PLASTER, HELLO DRYWALL

With the walls and ceilings hung, the wood trim replaced and the sill installed, I have my layout control points. I'll use those to detail the new soffit and jamb leg returns. But I need a beveled 2-by as a backer to fasten the drywall to. I rip this on the table saw and then install with 2-inch screws. Note: Before installing the full piece, I make sure the backer fits and the drywall passes by it cleanly using a drywall scrap as a template.

The soffit goes in first, and then I tuck the jamb legs underneath. Before installing them, I cut them proud of the wall thickness. I then rasp a chamfer on the back of each to create a leading edge that tucks tightly to the fascia casing. Next, I install the piece. I keep pressure toward the front while fastening. This usually leverages the slab tight to the fascia casing. Two-inch screws work best here, in case there's a gap between the jamb leg and the backer.

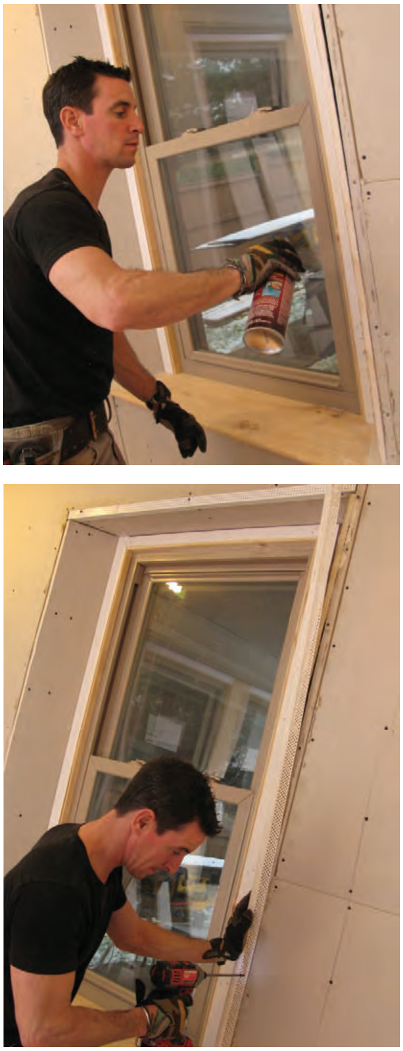
Rip the backer's bevel and fasten to the jack stud with 2" screws.

Cut off, then rasp down, the wild edge of each jamb leg.

ADD FLARE WITH TRIMLESS WINDOWS

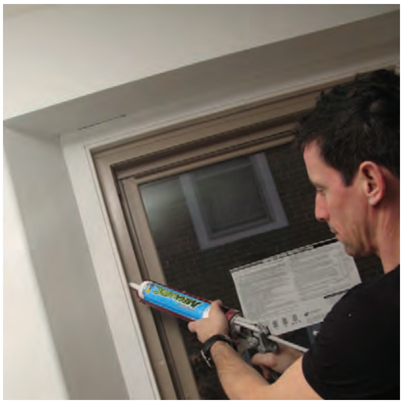
With the legs in place, I cut off the wild side then rasp the edges smooth.

The soffit corner is square and goes in first. I use bull-nosed corner bead on the flared jamb legs. Spraying each side of the return (wall and jamb leg) with 3M adhesive gets the board tacky. To get a tight fit, I force the bullnose tight to the drywall. This spreads it wide of 90 degrees. However, this eases the radius noticeably, so push hard. The glue helps hold the piece fast while I sink a few 2-inch screws.



Spray adhesive, press bullnosed corner bead hard to the corner to flush it up with the true angle of the flare, and then hold fast with screws.

Apply joint tape and compound. Sand and prime.



Caulk between wood and drywall to provide a flexible sealant.

The drywall tape and compound come next and it's just like any other drywall mudding/taping job, only in a smaller space.

It's a good idea to cover the union between inert (drywall) and mobile (wood; it changes with temperature, humidity) with caulk. So once the compound is applied, sanded and primed—and I cover all gaps with it, even the nail holes—those areas get caulk. White Lighting MegaLastic www.WLCaulk.com has been delivering good results and primo application lately.

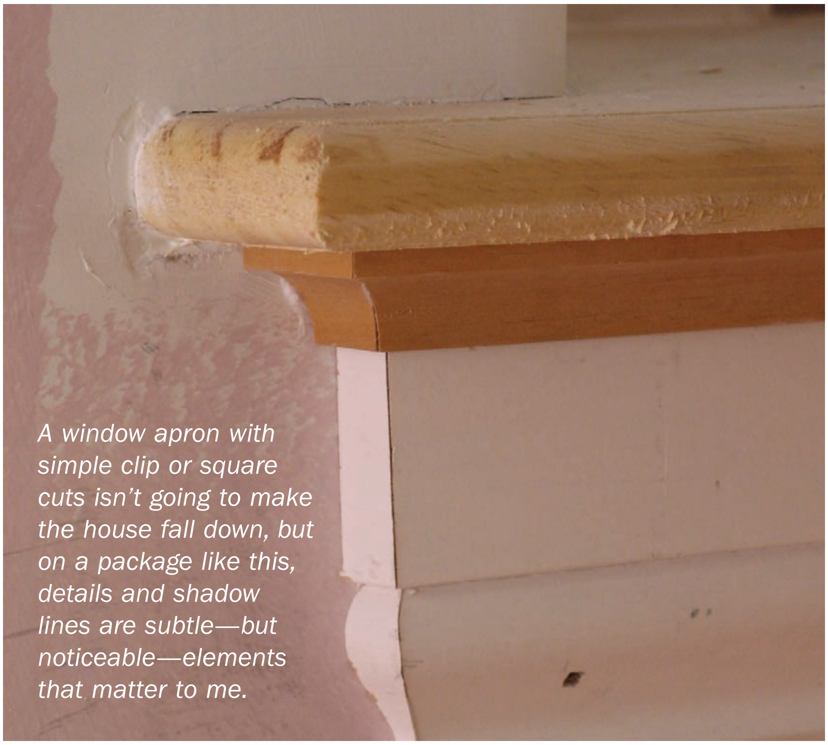
WINDOW APRONS

I like window aprons that are returned to the wall rather than clip-cut at the bottom edge. When it's a customer's house I want my best work to show. When it's my house—well, I live there so I really want my best foot forward.

On these aprons I used 5-1/2 inch ogee base molding ripped to 3-1/2 inches. Naturally, I flipped the ogee upside-down so the scroll showed and wrapped the top with a cove mold. I hold the base back from the ears of the sill about 1-1/2 inch. Once wrapped with the cove mold, the entire assembly is about 3/4-inch inside the sill.

Installation Note:Iit's easier to mark the center of the sill on the wall about 4 inches below it. Once my apron trim is cut, I mark the center of that on the scrolled edge. To install it I simply match up the lines and tack it. I check each side just to be sure my math is right, and then nail it off.

The apron completes the trimless window, and the room is now ready for the trim package of your choice, from crown or cornice molding at the top to base molding at the bottom. But that's another story... **EHT**



A window apron with simple clip or square cuts isn't going to make the house fall down, but on a package like this, details and shadow lines are subtle—but noticeable—elements that matter to me.

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Energy Savings Home Makeover

New Energy Star-qualified windows produce a quick return on investment.

By Kathy Ziprik

There was a unique moment this past August when Gail Jones felt chilly in her Houston, Texas, home. The thought made her laugh out loud.

During the previous summer, Jones and her family sweltered in their 2,800 square-foot, two-story home. Fans ran constantly in every room. Windows were blocked to keep out the sun. Energy bills soared higher than the sizzling outdoor temperatures. All that changed when the Jones family was selected to receive an Energy Savings Makeover organized by Houston radio show host Gary Parr.

"We selected this home because it represented a typical Houston area house that would truly benefit from an energy savings makeover," says Parr, host of the On the Air radio show. "This family of six was spending more than $900 a month on energy bills during a typical summer. That's because the home had little insulation, an inefficient HVAC system and old, single-paned aluminum-framed windows."

Parr started by asking listeners to his show to submit their homes for consideration of the makeover project. More than 800 entries flooded his office. "Our goal was to identify a typical home that could be transformed by receiving a house full of energy-efficient Simonton replacement windows, a new Ruud HVAC system and tankless water heater, a Honeywell programmable thermostat, Knauf insulation, Attic Breeze solar attic fans and other energy-efficient features," says Parr. "I went into this project wanting to showcase how an energy-efficient home could cut a homeowner's energy bill by at least 50 percent."

Following a 45-day installation schedule that included a full attic renovation, the Jones home more than met the goal. The first month's energy bill following the energy upgrades came in at $344—down from $943 for the same timeframe the previous year.

HOME ENERGY AUDIT

Before any changes were made in the Jones home, Parr supervised two energy audits of the house. The first was conducted by the Energy Systems Laboratory at Texas A&M University. They made recommendations based on their research and a visit to the home, and are conducting ongoing audits throughout the year to provide energy savings details and figures.

Direct Energy, one of the largest multi-state providers of retail energy services in North America, also did a comprehensive Home Energy Rating System (HERS®) energy analysis on the home's design and made recommendations for improvements.

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On a scale of 1 to 200, (with 200 being the most inefficient rating), the Jones's home rated a 195 prior to the renovations. Following the renovations, the home ranked 75, which is 10 full points lower than an Energy Star-qualified home.

"From all accounts, this energy makeover was a complete success," says Parr. "The family's July 2008 electric bill was about $750. A year later, after the radiant barrier and attic fans, vinyl replacement windows and HVAC system were installed, the bill, was just $319—and it was 12 percent hotter during that time in 2009 than the previous year!"

SAVINGS WITH WINDOWS

What made a significant impact on the energy efficiency of the Jones's home? The replacement of 20 old aluminum windows with new, energy-efficient Simonton vinyl windows certainly made an impact.

"We had the old windows completely covered to prevent the sun's powerful rays from baking the interior of our home," says Jones. "Other windows were inoperable, so we didn't have enough ventilation. The nightmare was solved the day the Energy Star-qualified windows were installed.

"We've got a full house with our four adopted children running in and out. The house was so hot last year that they slept on the living room couches because their bedrooms were too hot."

Parr and his team solved that problem by selecting Simonton vinyl replacement windows with Energy Tax Credit (ETC) glass packages for the home. "These windows are certified by the National Fenestration Rating Council to meet a U-factor rating of 0.30 or less, and a Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC) of 0.30 or less," says Parr. "These are the energy ratings stated by the U.S. government that are required for homeowners to take advantage of the $1,500 energy tax credit as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This incredible glass package, combined with the fusion-welded, energy-efficient vinyl frames, started improving the quality of life for the Jones family from the day they were installed."

IMMEDIATE PAYBACK

According to Parr, the vinyl windows paid for themselves immediately. Because the windows are so energy-efficient, the Jones family was able to eliminate the need for a second air conditioning unit. That purchase would have been upwards of $10,000. The cost of the windows and installation (not including the $1,500 tax credit) was approximately $9,500.

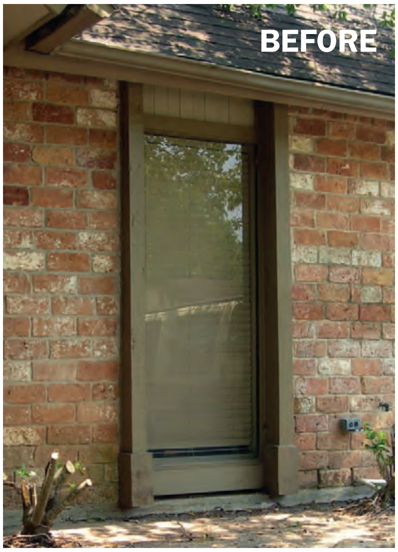
"This is the fastest return on investment I've ever seen," says Parr. "The replacement windows are so efficient in helping control the home's energy costs that the

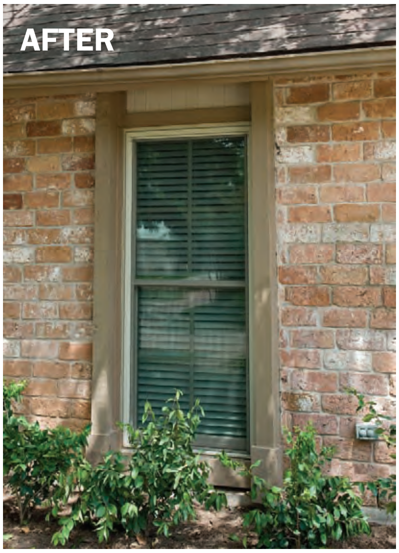
purchase of the second air conditioning unit simply wasn't needed. So, the vinyl windows more than paid for themselves from the first day they were installed."

STYLE WITH ENERGY SAVINGS

As an extra benefit, the Jones family had the option of selecting interior stylizing on their vinyl replacement windows. They were able to choose from a variety of rich, durable and scratch-resistant woodgrain laminates and popular hardware finishes in the Decorum by Simonton collection.

"Working with the Norandex branch in Houston and Hightower Construction made this window replacement project one of the easiest aspects of the Home Energy Makeover," says Parr. "The original, poorly-insulated windows gave the Jones family hefty energy bills, faded carpets and furnishings, and an uncomfortable living environment. With the Energy Star-qualified Simonton vinyl windows, the family saw an immediate savings on their energy bills and a distinct improvement in the living quality of the home." **EHT**





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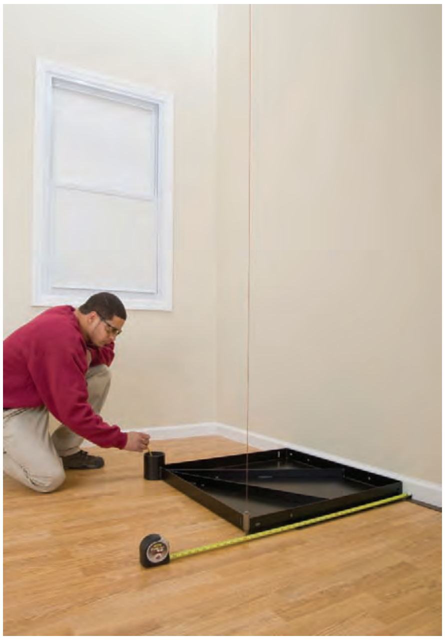
UP THE SPIRAL STAIRCASE

PROVIDED BY THE IRON SHOP

When I think of spiral staircases, my first thought is of racing to the top of the lighthouse on Elbow Cay, Bahamas, hoping for a chance to light the ancient beacon that alerts boats that they are approaching the outer edge of the islands. My other memory is spending a rare night at my uncle's fire station and climbing the old spiral staircase that led up to the sleeping quarters, just so I could slide down the pole to the equipment room. Spiral staircases aren't just for lighthouses and sleeping lofts, though. Sometimes a traditional staircase is not the best solution for your project, limited space or architectural constraints make a spiral staircase a better way to connect floors. Building a spiral staircase may seem like a job best performed by professionals; however by using readily available kits, a DIY'er with basic construction skills can save money by doing their own installation. We chose the standard Metal Spiral Staircase from The Iron Shop, and the kit included all the hardware needed for installation. Check with your local building codes to make sure that using a spiral staircase meets the code requirements for your application.

The homeowner should first measure the exact height of the floor to ceiling. This is one of those times when measuring twice is a good idea. Once you have measured this height, 108 inches in our example, divide the height by the number of risers and include the landing in this number to obtain the actual riser height. For a stair with 12 risers, the riser height is nine inches. Measuring from the top of one tread to the top of the next tread will equal nine inches, but check with your local building code for acceptable riser dimensions.

Decide which corner the top landing will fasten to. Measure out from the sides of the corners and mark along the edge of the opening. Using a laser line generator or a plumb bob, mark the spot on the floor where the vertical line from the top corner meets the floor. Using the same method, lay the vertical line on the top corner where the landing will be located and mark the floor again. Take the landing and turn it upside down on the floor, aligning its outside edges with the marks on the floor you just made. Keep the collar of the landing in the center of the opening. Trace the inside of the collar opening onto the floor leaving a circle pattern on the floor. Mark the center of the circle you just created. Using a straight edge, connect the circle center to the two marks that show the exterior plumb marks.



PLUMB AND INSTALL THE LANDING.

USE YOUR LANDING AS A GUIDE TO MAKE YOUR FLOOR MARKS.

Take your base flange and center it over the marks you have just drawn. Using your pencil or marker, mark the hole locations in the flange on the floor. These marks are where you will drill your pilot holes. If you are drilling into concrete, you will use a masonry bit and concrete anchors. Secure the base flange to the floor. With a helper, place the center pole into the flange opening. As your helper steadies the pole, begin adding treads from the top of the pole, and let them rest on each other. Be sure to place half the steps on the right and half on the left so the pole will be balanced.

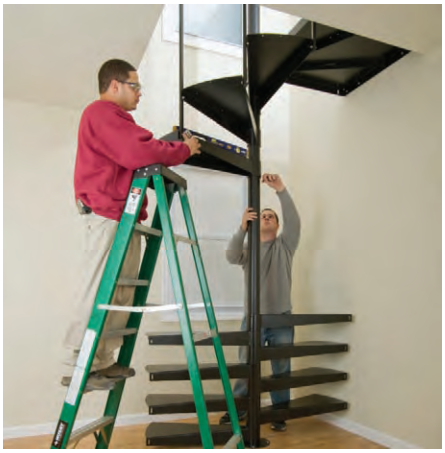
Once all the treads are in place, lower the top landing down and orient the landing into the corner you designated as the opening. If you are going to finish the stairs in wood, lower the landing the depth of the wood that will be used, usually, 3/4 inch for hardwood, 5/8 for bamboo and so forth, but check your flooring for exact measurement. When you add the hardwood flooring to the tread, this will give you a flush joint on the landing.

Using a spirit level, have your helper hold the landing level while you fasten bolts through the slots located near the edges of the landing. Once these are installed you can continue with the remainder of the bolts. Repeat your check for level and tighten the two top set screws in the landing and then tighten the lower ones.

Once your landing is plumb and its bolts are tightened, you will assemble the spindles to the treads. Beginning with the landing spindle, attach the top hole of the first spindle to the nose of the landin (the slot is located on the side of the stair you will walk down). It is important to make sure the adjustable angle top is facing up the staircase. Using your level, check the spindle for plumb in all directions, then have your helper stabilize the spindle as you tighten the hardware that locks it into place.

Taking the last tread of the ones stacked on the pole, raise it so that it is nine inches below the landing, or the distance calculated for riser height. Placing the spindle against the back nosing of the tread, check the tread for level and tightened the screws beginning with the top two to fasten it in place. Recheck your riser height and plumb at this point and correct if necessary. A mistake here will throw off the remaining riser heights. Repeat this step with the remaining treads, following the same pattern to ensure the stairs are oriented correctly.

On the bottom tread, you may need to adjust the height. Cut the excess tubing off with a hacksaw and file away any burrs. Tap the floor flange into place



INSTALL THE TREADS SO THAT THE REAR TREAD NOSE CONTACTS THE SPINDLE FROM THE UPPER TREAD.

using a hammer. Place the spindle into the bottom tread and fasten it to the floor with the provided bolt.

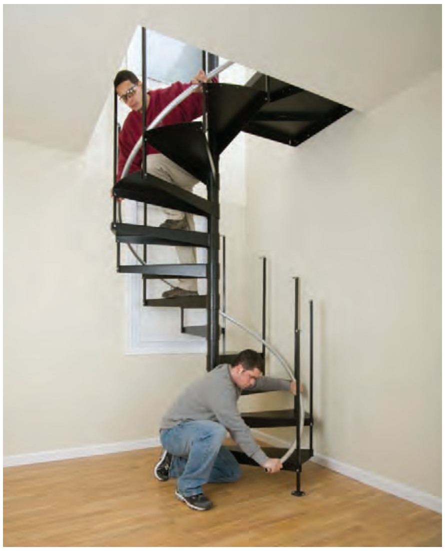
Now that the stair treads are in place, you will need to attach the railing to the spindles. Begin by determining whether your stairs are right hand up, or left hand up. Facing up the stairs if the railing is on your right, then you have right hand up and vice-versa for left. The example shown is left hand up. Next, uncoil the aluminum railing like unwinding a spring, making sure to avoid kinks as you enlarge its diameter to six inches greater than the diameter of the stairs. Carefully thread the railing up the inside of the stairs, letting the railing ride along the nosing of the treads as we work our way up the staircase. Once the railing is worked to the top of the stairs, carefully set it on top of the spindles. Then, increase the radius of the railing a small amount so that the railing lies correctly on the spindles. Beginning on the middle tread spindles, expand the railing going from the middle to the top and then from the middle to the bottom.

Leave some excess railing at the top of the stairs before beginning the next step. Take your drill and either place a collar at one inch or slide the drill bit into the chuck so that no more than one inch of drill bit is exposed to prevent drilling through both sides of the railing. Have your helper hold the railing in place on the top spindle. Keeping the drill at a 90-degree angle, perpendicular to the railing, and using the hole in the top spindle bracket as a drill guide, drill your pilot hole for the tapping screw that will attach the spindle to the railing. Secure the bracket to the railing with the provided screws. Recheck everything for plumb and correct if the process moved the spindle. With your helper holding the railing on the top of the spindles, repeat this process, always checking the spindles for plumb as you work your way down the stairs. Leave at least two inches of railing extending past the top and bottom spindles; attach the end caps with epoxy.

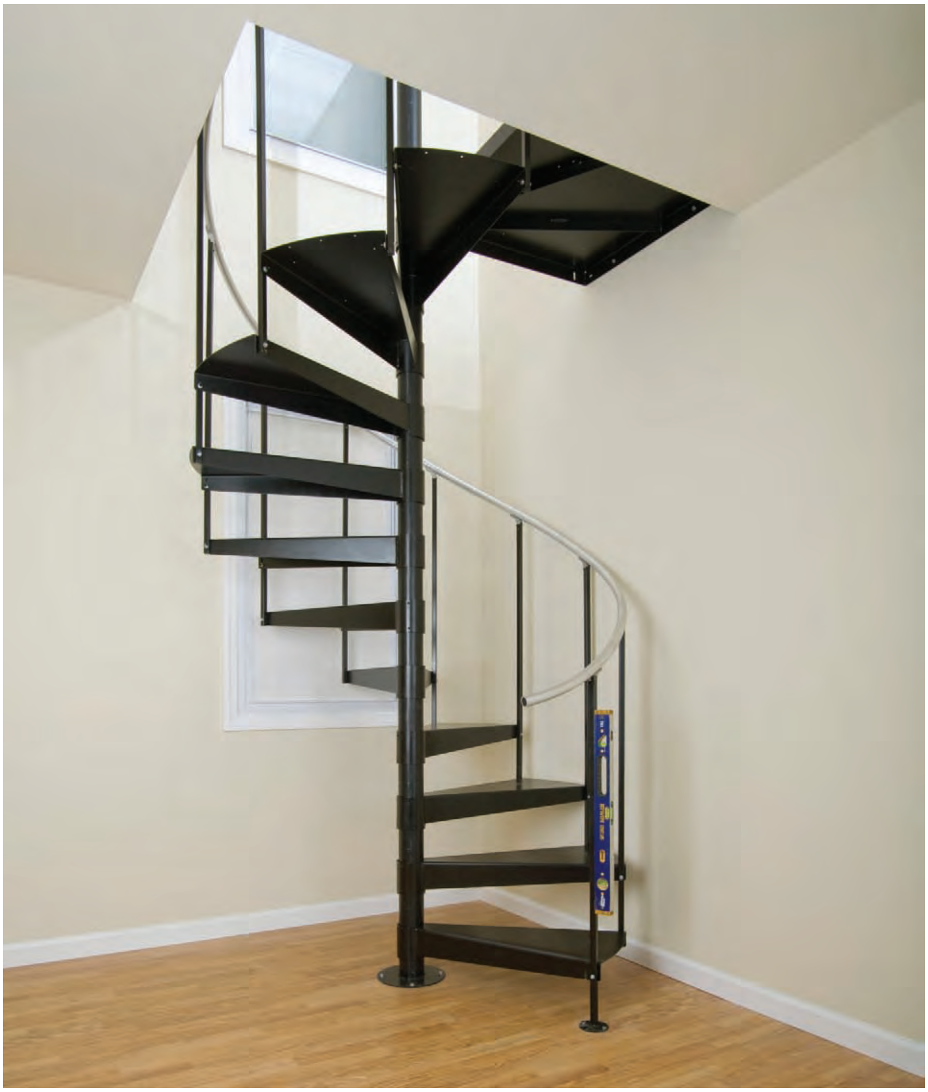
Fasten the landing rail by bolting its leg to the side of the landing so there is slightly less than a four-inch space from the underside of the bottom horizontal rail. Check for plumb and drill two holes into the center pole with a drill, secure at the center pole with two self-tapping screws so that the top of the rail is 36 inches above the finished floor.

Finish up by polishing or sanding any rough surfaces, and use touch-up paint for any areas marred during installation. Do not use latex paint when painting metal stairs.

The assembly takes just a few hours, and requires no special skills or tools. Metal Spiral Stair Kits start from $565. For more information regarding The Iron Shop and its products, call 1-800-523-7427, or visit www.theironshop.com.



CAUTIOUSLY WORK THE RAILING UP THROUGH THE INSIDE OF THE STAIRWELL.



CHECK FOR PLUMB AS YOU INSTALL THE RAILINGS, MAKING SURE THE SPINDLES WERE NOT MOVED DURING INSTALLATION.

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The pocket-style utility bag from Klein Tools keeps hand tools right by your hip, reducing trips to the toolbox. The bag is made from heavy-duty natural canvas for durability and resistance to tearing or abrasion. A 1/4-inch rope provides the top edge with structural reinforcement. The bottom of the bag is reinforced with leather, an eyelet in the bottom provides ventilation, and an interior pocket keeps small items secure. Tough nylon loops will attach the bag to belts up to 3 inches wide. Klein Tools are made in the USA. Visit www.cableorganizer.com.

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AirFlow Technology introduces the new AirFlow Breeze Ultra register vent booster fan with remote control. This quieter and more powerful version of the original AirFlow Breeze fits vents in the floor, wall or ceiling. By using a built-in temperature sensor, the AirFlow Breeze Ultra quietly delivers warm or cool air to any area of the home that is consistently too hot or too cold. In its role as a register booster fan, the AirFlow Breeze Ultra is easy to install in underperforming registers—in 6-by-10- and 6-by-12-inch sizes—to boost their performance and solve “problem rooms.” In its role as an air mover, the AirFlow Breeze Ultra may be installed in a wide variety of ways, utilizing the stud wall cavity as a passageway to move air up, down, room to room or level to level. Controlled by a three-speed fan setting, the AirFlow Breeze Ultra offers airflow rates up to 150 cubic feet per minute (CFM) but costs less than $5 per year to operate. Visit www.aftproducts.com.

QUICK, CUSTOM DRYWALL CUTS WITH THE BLADE RUNNER

The new Goldblatt Blade Runner is quite possibly the fastest tool on the market for cutting drywall. The tool’s unique design cuts both sides of the drywall sheet simultaneously, cutting 50 percent faster compared to a standard utility knife. By pushing the tool away from the body, the cutting action is easy to control and extremely versatile, cutting straight, cutting corners and even cutting curves. Plus, the concealed blades reduce the risk of onsite accidents. The Blade Runner is a great solution for making hard-to-accomplish trim cuts near the edge of a panel. It works by making a deep score line on just the paper—not the gypsum—which the installer then snaps at the core, leaving a crisp, clean finish. By not cutting the gypsum, the Blade Runner generates less dust than conventional utility knives. The replaceable long-lasting blades cut more than 3,700 feet in 1/2-inch, 5/8-inch and exterior drywall. Visit www.goldblattbladerunner.com.

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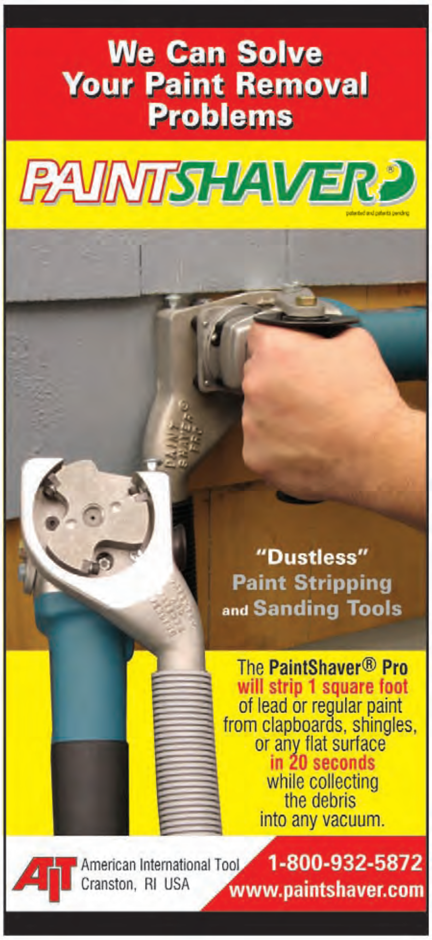
Battic Door Energy Conservation Products introduces the E-Z Hatch Attic Access Door System for Energy Star-qualified homes and "green" building contractors. The E-Z Hatch Attic Access Door is an easy-to-install, R-42 insulated, prefinished attic access door system that installs into the ceiling in minutes and provides a sealed, energy-efficient, 22-by-30-inch access opening into the attic space. Developed by contractors as an alternative to energy-wasting, pull-down attic stairs, the E-Z Hatch comes completely assembled. Designed for use in new construction or retrofit applications, the unit consists of a solid wood frame, an insulated plug door and trim. Triple rubber gaskets provide an air tight seal. The E-Z Hatch fits between trusses spaced 24 inches on center. If used with joists on 16-inch centers, simply cut one joist and add headers. Visit www.batticdoor.com.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Bigfoot Systems	51
Campbell Hausfeld	47
Central Boiler	70
Cepco Tool Company	23, 87
Charmaster	73
Cofair Prodcuts	13, 83
Color Savvy	5
CreteSheet	43
Decorate With Mouldings	61
Dix Systems	76
Drill Doctor	26
Eco-heater	29
Elias Woodwork	58
Energy Saving Products	10
EZ A Peel	59
Flex Trim	56
Frogtape	61
Fypon	63
Garage Alert	28
Garagemaid	76
Genova	11
GRK Fasteners	50
Goddard Spiral Stairs	16
Gorilla Glue	37
Hannel	77
Harbor Freight	19
Hydro-Sil	32
Iceblox	33
Ingram's Water & Air Equipment	75
InSoFast	35
Kemiko	16
Kinzel Wood Products	12
Lafarge	4
Lam-Hammer	36
Lee Valley	91
Level Best2	21
Lumber Liquidators	27
Mark E. Industries	45
Maze Nails	39
Milescraft	57
Moduline	48
Montana Ghost Wood	96
MP Global Products	1
NAC Products	62
Paint Shaver	95
Pexheat.com	74
PexSupply.com	69
Radiant Floor Company	72
Rheem	49
Sashco	60
Schluter Systems	42
Simonton	89
Skil	7
Stainless Steel Direct	79
STEP Warmfloor	9
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Sunheat	67
Swylite	35
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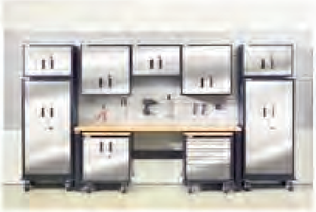

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